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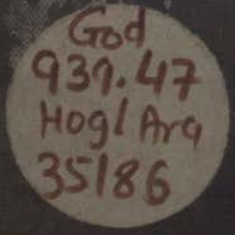
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ARABIA

ARABIA

BY

D. G. HOGARTH

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PREFATORY NOTE

THE following sketch, in which an attempt is made to cover the history of Arabia from our earliest knowledge down to the entry of Arabs into the Great War, was written to make one fourth part of a volume planned to comprehend also Syria, Mesopotamia, and Persia. The original scheme, however, could not be carried out; and my sketch, slight and summary as it is, has to appear by itself. Since I am not an Arabist, it is hardly necessary to say that I owe much to other writers—most, perhaps, to Caetani, Huart, Snouck-Hurgronje, and Margoliouth. The last named has laid me under the deepest obligation; for he has been so good as to read my book in proof, and to correct in several places my ignorance or my inadvertence. But mine remains the entire responsibility for both the matter and the manner of the following pages. The orthography adopted for Arabic words will be seen to involve a compromise between scientific transliteration and the vulgar spelling of familiar forms.

D. G. H.

16*th November* 1921.

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ARABIA

ARABIA, as a regional name, has different acceptations: some confine it to the Peninsula, some include the great wedge of desert, prolonged to an apex between Syria and Mesopotamia far north of that thirtieth parallel, which roughly subtends the peninsular mass. Which acceptation should a historian follow, when called upon to deal with 'Arabia' apart from other Arab-speaking lands? If he restricts his view to what lies south of the thirtieth parallel, he is conscious of arbitrarily neglecting a great tract whose physical and social continuity with the Peninsula is obvious; which has been intimately involved in the latter's history, and, moreover, being strictly neither Syrian nor Mesopotamian, will hardly receive adequate treatment from historians of any other Arab land. If, on the other hand, he tries to incorporate its history in that of peninsular Arabia, he will find himself dealing with much that is more proper to the history of Mesopotamia or of Syria. From the horns of the dilemma he had best escape by compromise. Primarily, the history of the Peninsula will be his theme; but he *may* agree to take into secondary account the history of the 'Syrian Desert' up to the latitude of Rakka, so far as it has affected, or been affected by, that of the Peninsula.

Arabia, almost as long as its history, properly so called, is known at all, has been subjected, more uniformly than any other area of like extent in the world, to three of the strongest forces which make for political unity, namely, common speech, common faith, and common racial tradition. Their community has resulted, in the main, from a simple uniformity of physical conditions. Social differences have always been less in Arabia than perhaps anywhere else, not only between one community and another, but between one class and another in one community. At the same time, the physical conditions have imposed, with equal dominance, political disunion.

No historical picture is more difficult to compose than the Arabian. The unknown history of the Peninsula is out of all proportion to the known. Large areas remain veiled during long periods, while small areas are revealed for short periods by deceptive lights. A society, which continued to be unlettered and incurious long after the world around had grown old in civilization, began to write its own story when a proselytizing religion had infused it with passionate prejudice and partisan spirit. The historian, however, finds this compensation: Arab society has changed so little within the known period that he may venture to infer its prehistoric from its historic condition with better assurance than elsewhere. If its history be reviewed, no break between modern and ancient will be found till at least as far back as the opening years of the seventh century A. D., the epoch in which the politico-religious system of Islam was created, and imposed on the whole society as the paramount determinant of its character down to

the present day. No sketch of Arabian history can start satisfactorily from any later date; while the little that is known prior to the seventh century is of merely antiquarian interest except in so far as it can be related to that epoch.

§ 1. *Times of 'Ignorance'*

If the Peninsula be surveyed about A. D. 570, at the moment of Muhammad's birth, it will be seen that its only chapter of more ancient civilization has for some time been closed. A lettered society, god-fearing, law-abiding, agricultural, and wealthy had existed in one part of it, the south-west; but it is in decay. Not only has it ceased to be lettered, but most of it is dispersed outside the region which used to support its civilization. Tribes, conscious of derivation from it, are now to be found all over the Peninsula—in Oman, for example, in the oases of Najd and Bahrain (this term meant anciently the whole north-western littoral of the Persian Gulf and not, as now, only certain islands); in the Hejaz oases of Taif, Wadi Fatima and Yathrib (later to be called Medina); even on the fringes of Syria and of Irak. Their dispersal had come about, in some measure, by a continuous process, which goes on still. The south-western corner is the only Arabian region in which sufficient regular rainfall enables a considerable population to settle and multiply largely; but it is not rich enough, with dry farming, to provide for its constant increase. Therefore surplus population is ever passing out from its borders to find subsistence elsewhere. If

the small arable oases of the western and eastern coast-lands have been filled to their utmost capacity, these migrants move, wave upon wave, along lines of least resistance, into and often over the central steppes, where they lapse into a nomadic habit, not easily shaken off even upon their arrival in the fringe of the arable lands of the north. Their broad track can be followed by noting the constant tribal change in the centre of the Peninsula throughout the historic period. Whereas in the coast-lands there has been comparative stability—in Hejaz for example, we find at this day such tribes as the Thakif, the Juhaina, the Billi, the Hudhayl, the Saad, various constituents of the Harb and many more, occupying the same ranges as in the early days of Islam—in the great steppe area of Najd, on the other hand, there is not now a single tribe holding the district it held in Muhammad's time. Arab tradition records that, some centuries before the Prophet, this long-drawn process was accelerated, during a brief period of years, by a mass migration, which at one stroke emptied the south-west of good proportion of its inhabitants; and, unless some credit be allowed to that tradition, it is hard to account for the fact that, before the sixth century, Yemenite society had already relapsed to much the same state in which it is at this day—a congeries of detached tribes, little, if at all, superior in civilization to any other oasis folk in the Peninsula. Especially is it difficult to explain the lapse of the Minaean and Sabaean home-lands (the districts behind the coastal range) from the social condition attested by their ancient buildings, inscriptions, and works of art, into that

inferiority to western Yemen, in which Islam found them and they still remain. That some of their decay, indeed, dated from a much earlier age is indicated by the experience of Aelius Gallus, the Roman Prefect of Egypt, who penetrated the back country of Yemen in 26 B.C. only to find desert and oasis villages where his information had led him to expect continuous fertility and fenced cities. Arab legend ascribes it all to one single event, the bursting of a great dam near Marib in the reign of one Muzaykiya, whose date is uncertain, but possibly should be placed before the third century. This catastrophe has been declared unhistorical because inscriptions still extant on stones of the ruined dam show that it still served some purpose as late as the sixth century. The tradition, however, should be understood to crystallize—after the manner of popular legend—a series of events into one, and so to preserve a memory of the greatest disaster that can befall an irrigated country, a gradual and permanent lowering of its maximum head of water. The histories of Irak and other wide arable lands wholly dependent on irrigation will show how slight a fall may blot out the agriculture of large areas and dislocate population, and how difficult becomes the restoration of former conditions, or even the arrest of further decay. If the Jauf, which the monsoon rains of western Yemen hardly reach, had (as ancient remains show it certainly had) a large and wealthy agricultural population, it must once have possessed so elaborate a system of water-storage and distribution, that a single generation's neglect would have spelled ruin for a large proportion of it. Possibly similar facts lie behind other early

Arab stories of whole peoples overwhelmed by sands, such as the tribe of Ad.

In the sixth century Arabia kept no more than a memory of that lettered civilization, but a memory propagated in all districts by the presence of tribes whose ancestors had shared it. Especially in Hejaz was this so; for the Jarhum tribesmen and their successors the Khuhaa, the earliest known inhabitants of the Meccan district after the legendary Amalekites, were both Yemenite; while the dominant Arabs of Yathrib, the tribes of Aus and Khazraj, were reputed to be descendants of some who fled from the broken dam. Ignorant though all had become of Sabaean culture, they were accounted aristocrats in their respective localities. They were not the only foreigners of old standing. At all settled spots in Hejaz—at Yathrib, Taima, Khaibar, Mecca, and Taif—were colonies of 'Jews', now so far Arabized that, keeping the faith of Palestine, they ignored its language and called their tribes, their sons and their daughters, by Arab names. Few, if any, were of the seed of David. In vast proportion no doubt they were Judaized Aramaeans, of one family with the Nabathaeans of Petra and most of the 'Jews' of Irak. Whence, when, or why they had come so far south and gone farther still we do not know. In the middle of the fifth century there were enough Jews even in Yemen to impose rule on the Himyar Highlands; and thence some of those found later in Hejaz may have come back with the Arab migrants. Others hailed from the Euphratean country and had been Arabized before they left their homes. Among these, it is worth remembering, were ancestors of the Meccan

Kuraish, if a later Arab belief was well founded. The Caliph Ali, from whom we have it, was but a loose talker; and it is not consistent with the Prophet's claim to be an Arab of Arabs 'of the stock of Kuraish and the speech of the Beni Saad', or with the general creed of Moslems ever since. But a grain of truth in it would help to explain the remarkable commercial instinct and enterprise of the Kuraish, the outstanding capacity for affairs shown by some of its families, notably those of Hashim and Umayya, and, above all, the phenomenon of Muhammad himself. In any case, we may safely assume that the general cause of Aramaean settlement in Arabia was commerce. The overland traffic down the 'Spice Road' has, perhaps (like that across the Peninsula to Gerra), been exaggerated by modern historians of ancient economics, who are apt to forget how good the evidence is for very early use of Red Sea ports connected by short desert roads with the middle valley of the Nile. But some considerable volume of early caravan trade is required to account not only for the 'Jews' in Yemen, but for the Minaean, Lihyanite, and Nabathaean rock-remains at el-Hajr and el-Ula in north Hejaz, whose true origins had been forgotten by the Prophet's time.

Thus, before the birth of Muhammad, the Peninsula of Arabia in general, and its western part in particular, had absorbed two considerable elements of population, both derived originally from settled societies which had possessed civilizations far above barbarism; and one of these elements, at any rate, still professed a monotheistic cult, which doubtless was reduced in such remote colonies to superstitious formalism of little ethical value, but is

known to have been considered by Arabs before the Prophet theoretically superior to polytheistic paganism.

These were not the only elevating factors at work in the age immediately preceding the birth of Islam. The Peninsula had remained, for long ages, perhaps until after our era, singularly immune from the influences, political or social, of civilizations outside its limit. Neither the story of Queen Balkis of 'Sheba', nor a record of Arab tribute to Assyria warrants any inference that Arabs, ranging south of the Hamad, came into vital contact with the northern Semitic powers. Nor, in all probability, were they well acquainted with Pharaonic Egyptians. 'Punt' was almost certainly not in Arabia. Queen Hatshepsut's artist gives the land too African a look to suit the wadi-estuaries of the south-western Peninsula; nor may Yathrib be equated with Athribis, until at least one of those myriad relics, which Egyptians have left on or in the soil wherever their arms or commerce passed, has been turned up in Hejaz. But before the sixth century A. D., the isolation of Arabia had been infringed on more frontiers than one. Augustan Rome had made a beginning of encroachment, though her one military venture into the Peninsula was abortive, and her cultural influence was carried but a short way south and east at second-hand by Nabathaeans. Byzantine Rome and Sasanian Persia made themselves felt after the fourth century. Each of these Empires maintained on the northern fringe of Arabia a purely Arab state dependent on herself; and in virtue of relations which his respective client established by arms, diplomacy, and trade with southern kinsmen, each

imperial sovereign claimed a general lordship over the peninsular Arabs, which was by no means without effect. By the Prophet's time, the tribes of Bahrain and Najd had come to regard themselves as naturally dependent on one or other of those external Empires; and if Muhammad did indeed send, in the year 628 (or 629), to Heraclius and to Chosroes a summons to repent and be saved, his purpose was less to expand his creed than to denounce acknowledged suzerainties. One at least of the emperors is said to have returned an emphatic assertion of his claim to the allegiance of the audacious upstart's person and city. Both Byzantium and Persia are known to have interfered as of right at certain moments even in remote parts of the Peninsula. Abyssinia was acting in the Byzantine interest when she invaded Yemen in the sixth century in order to suppress the 'Jews' and set up a Christian hegemony; and again, when subsequently she attempted to extend her influence over Hejaz by the famous 'Elephant' expedition of Abraha. After the latter's failure, the Persian King, solicited by an Arab exile to reassert a sovereignty which, not Yemen, but Byzantium had contemned, seized the country and held it by direct occupation till Muhammad's time.

The poetry of the 'Ignorance' (so the age before Islam is called) betrays the profound impression made on primitive societies in the south by the comparatively luxurious apparatus of their northern kinsmen in Ghassan and Hira. It is needless to look beyond these states to account for alien features or tendencies in Arabia; for before the era of the expansion of Islam the Arab of the

Peninsula had but scanty knowledge of greater powers beyond them. Nor, indeed, in face of the ruins of palatial buildings on the fringe of the steppe beyond Jordan, does it astonish us at all, that Ghassan, for one, should have seemed to southern Arabs on such an enviable plane of civilization that they were fain to adopt its political allegiance and its official faith. Ghassan was a purely Arab state, risen out of the ruins of an earlier civilization of the steppe—the Palmyrene state of Udhaina and Zainab (Odenathus and Zenobia of Roman records). Its founders, among whom was a Yemenite element, had adopted the Christian profession of latter-day Palmyra, interpreting it according to the Monophysite doctrine of the Syrians. They followed Palmyra also in taste for Byzantine art and secular culture; but they did not imitate—or they quickly relinquished—Palmyrene nationalism with its opposition to Rome. Therefore Justinian acknowledged their *Malik*, Harith (Aretas), for King of the Arabs and nominated him Patrician of the Empire to keep its southern marches and harry Hira, the client state of the rival Persian. Which commissions Aretas did faithfully fulfil, both immediately on his own account, and also some dozen years later under Belisarius; and, for reward, Ghassan enjoyed about a century of half-nomadic prosperity, its princes and nobles keeping no fixed capital, though they had the districts of both Palmyra and Damascus in which to choose one, but living in winter in the warm Jaulan, east of the Jordan valley, and moving in summer into the steppe, to keep state at such watering-places as Bair, Azrak, and Kusair el-Amra, where their painted palaces and churches still

serve to shelter Bedawin chiefs. But being ever in the forefront of Byzantine warfare against Persia, and weakened by the latter's successes and by the tribal defections proper to a Bedawin state, Ghassan was moribund by the time Islam was ready to despoil it.

Hira is the more celebrated by Arabian poets because it had longer time to accumulate splendours at a fixed capital in the Euphratean marches, south of later Kufa; perhaps also because it professed officially almost to the last a congenial pagan creed. Its dominant caste was again of Yemenite derivation; and one may claim the civilization of the Lakhmids for a last survival of Sabaean glory. A good part of the commonalty was, or became, Christian; it had a local bishop early in the fifth century; and then or soon after his sheep were Nestorian. During the greater part of Hira's three centuries of prosperity its princes had to abjure in public a faith associated with the Byzantine enemy of their Persian overlord; but Christian sympathies were ascribed popularly to some of them and to many members of their households; and the last Lakhmid, Numan III, came out into the open as a Christian convert to involve his dynasty in extinction at the hands of an angry sovereign. This catastrophe happened so late as the period of Muhammad's early manhood. During the brief interval that remained before the hosts of Islam would break out in the direction of Persia, a fighting tribe of Bedawins from the south, the famous Tai, who have dwindled to-day to a remnant in upper Mesopotamia, occupied the room of the Lakhmids. They proved unable to maintain the decaying Persian supremacy against the waxing confidence of the

Arabs of the Shamiya, whose victory over an expeditionary column of Khusrau's army, in 610, is said to have raised the hopes of the coming monarch of Arabia.

Communication with Ghassan and Hira through caravaners, adventurers, pilgrims, exiles and what not, and the rumour of greater states at their back, impressed one patent fact on the southern Arabs during a century before the birth of Islam—that, whatever was to be in another world, in this at least wealth, luxury, consideration and power did not follow polytheistic paganism. It is no surprise, therefore, to find that, in many parts of the Peninsula, and especially in Najd and Bahrain, which were in closest touch with Hira, a profession of monotheism was generally made. It adopted the Christian denomination, because Persian religion, nationally exclusive, discouraged alien converts, and because, too, Arabs of the Prophet's generation seem always to have esteemed the Byzantine power above the Persian, notwithstanding the latter's victories. Muhammad himself professed belief in it rather than in its rival, proving thereby his political sense : for while Persia was to go down before his successors, Arab Muslimin would never overwhelm the Roman Empire of the East. In the obscure history of eastern and central Arabia before Islam, we notice more hostility, than leaning, towards Iranism ; and at one time, probably early in the sixth century, a power which certain migrants from Hadramaut had built up in southern Najd (Yamama), and extended over Bahrain (like the Saud power in our own day), dared openly to defy Persia by attacking Hira and imposing some sort of subservience upon it. That

this little known power of Kinda was officially Christian, and nominally client of the Byzantine Empire, is probable: for the famous warrior-poet of the Tai, Imru el-Kais, a professed Christian, was allied to its royal house; and Yamama, its Najdean seat, was notoriously an active centre of monotheism before Muhammad began to preach. The Meccan Prophet is said even to have sat at the feet of the Najdean before Arabia grew too small for two Apostles of One God. In western districts of the Peninsula we hear of less Christianity, but in all of some. At Mecca there seems to have been more of it than at Medina, perhaps because fewer Jews and more Abyssinians resorted to the former. We are told of a Christian bishop having preached with much eloquence at one of its district fairs in the hearing of Muhammad. He hailed from the Christian community which existed in Yemen under Abyssinian rulers from the beginning of the fourth century to the Prophet's own time, with one interval of Jewish predominance.

Arabian pre-Islamic Christianity cannot be supposed to have had much spiritual influence. Like allegiance to this communion or to that in the Near East at the present day, it was inspired largely by the politics of tribal or other groups, and may safely be denied even the little ethical value that can be credited to Arabian Judaism. The Meccans and other Muslimin asserted indeed later, that it had been professed, in Najd at least, only to justify the taking of unfair advantage of non-Christians during the Sacred Truce. But, at the least, it led to relations with the Byzantine circle of culture, and to penetration by Christian priests and monks, some of whom were lettered,

and, it is believed, propagated over Arabia the use of the script since known as Arabic.

Regardless, however, of all monotheistic influences, the town of Mecca, under the domination of the Kuraish, obstinately cherished the polytheistic paganism, to which the great majority of the peninsular Arabs undoubtedly still adhered. This majority included, in the sixth century, most of the purely nomadic tribesmen, and probably such urban communities as then existed outside Yemen. Meccan persistence in an old way of faith was not due either to rooted conservatism or to exceptional ignorance of the world around. The Meccans of the 'Ignorance' were a commercially minded and comparatively progressive folk, who maintained a considerable overland traffic both with the far north, and with other parts of the Peninsula, and oversea communication from their port and winter resort at Jidda with the Christian kingdom of Axum. Not less alive to material advantage than any other Arabs, they were quite ready in their own interest to modify immemorial barbaric usage, as they showed by persistent discouragement of Blood Feud, a policy which was to bear auspicious fruit under a new Dispensation; and, apparently, they were equally prepared to introduce or receive fresh gods into their Pantheon, if these promised to increase the range of their influence and the sources of their wealth. The story that an icon of the Byzantine Virgin was associated in the Kaaba with the female idols of the Arabs, Uzza and Allat, should not be lightly dismissed; and there is some reason to suspect that even Allah himself was not older at Mecca than the advent of the Kuraish. The Meccans were in

the exceptional position of being able to make more out of polytheistic paganism than any of them expected to make by monotheism. Under their control lay a central Holy Place, and perhaps others also in the district (for example at Arafat and Muna), which for some reason, lost in prehistoric mist, had become metropolitan. There alone the particular tribal gods of many societies found a common 'home from home' on neutral ground. This meeting-place, like the Sacred Truce of three months which enabled access to it by the tribes concerned, owed its existence less, no doubt, to a religious superstition than to a politico-economic need of which many other tribal societies in history have betrayed their sense—the need for a sanction, without loss of tribal pride, of common meeting and action and respite from the social strain of perpetual war. Why, however, an all but waterless valley should have been so chosen lies beyond our ken. The Kuraish, indeed, had their sufficient explanation. It was that by the one watering-place of the valley, the spring Zemzem, Hagar, when driven forth, had laid Ishmael; and that Abraham, father of all Semites, finding him there, built on a heavenly model, or brought down ready-made from the skies, a house to which all sons of his son were bidden resort. So the Meccans. But one suspects that the well had known a goddess before it knew a god. Even in the local legend Abraham finds an old woman in possession. If the Kuraish imported Allah, who some think was the particular god of their tribe, they may well have imported Abraham too. If there is anything in the story of their Euphratean origin they, at any rate, had him to their Father.

In any case the place, if not the building upon it, must have been a very ancient sanctuary. On no other assumption can early settlement on such a spot as the site of Mecca be explained. The subsequent town may well have grown as a half-way station for trade following the Spice Road; but so ill-favoured a spot can hardly be supposed to have been selected originally by caravaners, while at no great distance, in the Wadis Fatima and Laimun, on the one hand, and at Taif on the other, were plentiful waters and arable fields. Mecca, in fact, must have been a settlement before the Spice Trade began to pass. It is claimed that the Greek, Diodorus of Sicily, alluded to it when, at about the moment of the birth of Christ, he mentioned the existence of a much-revered temple in Arabia; and four centuries earlier still Herodotus may have been prompted by some rumour of its stone-worship and its goddess and god, who were before Allah, to write that curious note on Arabian oath-taking which appears in his story of Kambyses. Moslem tradition held that no houses stood at Mecca before the establishment of Kuraishite power, and that the well Zemzem had then long been lost to sight and was not rediscovered till later still by the Prophet's grandfather. But if it be true that the Kaaba with its annual feast, resorted to by pagans from all Arabia, and its Sacred Truce to be observed for Meccan benefit and theirs, was of old standing ere the Prophet was born, these inconsistent traditions are absurd, since the valley would have been unusable without its spring. What is certain is that, in the sixth century, Mecca was already a very considerable town. Besides a nobility of birth, whose qualification,

it appears, was a strain of the earlier Khuhaa blood, it had developed a nobility of commerce, and another of hereditary office in the local sanctuaries and administration of the Pilgrimage. It had some sort of municipal government, under a Council of Elders, to which admission was not granted normally before a citizen reached forty years of age; and, although the community was distinguished into tribes, it was capable of adopting a common policy in the general interest. Abstention from acts which would entail blood-feud; combination to boycott or otherwise punish offenders in such a way as to avoid exciting such feud; co-operation in caravan-trade on a great scale—all these fruits of commercial organization are recorded of its citizens before they accepted Islam. The lodgement and supply of Pilgrims seem to have been regulated on a fixed system; and their annual resort was an active cause of commercial and political relations with other communities. So far as we can tell, Mecca made a nearer approach to the contemporary standard of civilized life than any other settlement in peninsular Arabia. Though we know little about the south-western towns at this epoch, and nothing at all about any in Oman and Bahrain, all may safely be rated below Mecca. The Highlands of Yemen appear always to have been organized, as they are now, κωμηδόν, i.e. by village groups, not by metropolitan centres; and in the sixth century there were no longer any considerable urban communities in the Yemenite Jauf. The only rival to Mecca may have been in the coastal Lowland where Zabid had a lettered society, and the earliest inscriptions in pre-Islamic Arabic have been found. In Oman, Bahrain, and Najd half-settled

oases, rather than towns, were the rule, though in the last named more civilization existed than is there to-day. In Hejaz itself, both Taif and Yathrib have to be reckoned with; but the first, although its successful resistance to the Prophet's army argues it a compact community in the seventh century, was never reckoned by contemporaries the equal of Mecca; while Yathrib is known to have lacked all urban organization before Muhammad took it in hand. Petra lay outside the Peninsula and was already decayed.

§ 2. *Institution of Islam*

Such was the comparatively civilized, metropolitan, and cosmopolitan society, standing upon ancient ways in the interests of its material prosperity, into which, about A.D. 570, a son was born to Abdullah, son of Abd el-Muttalib, of humble family in the Hashimite clan of the Kuraish. This clan, which then, or soon after, acknowledged Abu Talib for chief, was of less consideration than at least one other, the Umayyad, which boasted an infusion of Yemenite blood. Muslimin of later times, claiming ancestral glories for their Prophet, which he had not claimed for himself, represented that a branch of his family (that branch from which the Abbasid Caliphs were to spring) owned and administered the well, Zemzem, by inheritance from the glorious estate of Hashim, who like his ancestor, Kusai, the establisher of the Kuraish, had controlled the town's chief source of wealth, the Pilgrimage. Abdullah's son was called Muhammad, i.e. 'Praised', a name not very usual at that time, but

destined, under variant forms, to be conferred upon more male infants than any other name in the world. Little is known of the boy or the young man, or, indeed, till, as human growth is reckoned in Arabia, Muhammad was already far gone in middle life. But a few trustworthy things recorded of his earlier days are significant. Being orphaned and without inheritance, he was hired out by his uncle, Abu Talib, to caravanning as camel-man and guard, and so he qualified early for the superior conduct of long-distance convoys to Syria—a function demanding courage, capacity of leadership, and diplomatic and military address. Qualities of character and intellect combined with nice care of his youthful person commended him especially to one of his patrons, Khadija, a widow in his clan; and marriage with her assured him, from early manhood, a competence and consideration in the community.

Anxiety for his patron's goods before marriage and his own afterwards directed Muhammad's attention to the precarious nature of Meccan prosperity. The town was depending for its wealth, its food supply, and the affluence of pilgrims on the mercy of tribal societies outside its own control. One of these, the Hawazin, one of the ancestors of the great modern tribe of Harb, was at open feud with the Meccans and raided up to their very walls during some years of his earlier life as a settled citizen. How soon this danger and other material, as well as spiritual, considerations induced meditation of Monotheism we do not know; but certainly, before his thirty-ninth year, Muhammad had formed some plan to reform the social organization of the Arabs by unification of their religion. There had been

examples enough and even apostles of Monotheism to instruct him—not only the Najdean teacher, Maslama, but a local iconoclast, Zaid ibn Amr, who preached abhorrence of meats offered to idols; and he is said to have listened at a fair to a Christian bishop from Yemen. His own words in the older parts of the Koran assure us of his early intercourse with Judaists. Though he could not read their Sacred Book for himself (he remained more or less illiterate to a late period of life), and such as the Meccan Jews are unlikely to have been able to convey its inner spirit, he could not fail to hear of the reiterated promise, by which Jews have held fast in all ages and lands, that the One God gives the Kingdom to whosoever will worship Him in singleness. If this promise had been slow of fulfilment for the Jews, Muhammad had seen in Ghassan and Syria that Jehovah did not fail other 'Peoples of the Book'.

For that matter, a less keen intelligence than Muhammad's could have discerned easily enough that one way towards ending the tribal peril lay through the blending of Mecca and the tribes into one polity; and if this was to be done (as alone it could be done in Arabia) through religion, all particularist gods must be absorbed in one. A Hashimite's choice of one god to absorb the rest in Mecca could not be doubtful; and if further enhancement of Allah, who already had the peculiar allegiance of the dominant civic caste, were to be promoted, what other means should a Meccan have conceived than to clothe him with the attributes of the God of greatest visible power in the contemporary world, Jehovah of the Jews and the Christians? In Muhammad's earliest conception

and teaching of Monotheism, Allah, distinguished by the epithet Rahman, went very near to an identification which, had it not been ultimately for the attitude of the Jews of Arabia themselves, might have ended by being complete.

In whatever measure, however, Muhammad's monotheistic meditations may be explained reasonably by his political experience and sense, and however rightly his first conscious ambition be interpreted as a desire to secure for his tribe and city an undisputed hegemony of western Arabia, some spiritual motive in himself, and some spiritual aspiration in his hearers, must be allowed for, if the acceptance of his pretension to divine commission is to be intelligible. Perhaps a key to the minds of both Master and disciples is to be sought in that passionate craving for Oneness, which, even at this day, is the fundamental fanaticism of Arabs. Something of its force on their thought and action has been illustrated often enough among ourselves by the notorious passion for finding single origins or single causes which has clouded many western intellects far more cultivated than theirs.

Inspired by continual meditation during the long leisure of a Meccan of means, Muhammad reached the age of thirty-eight convinced of a peculiar mission from his God to reform Arabia by Monotheism, and prepared to face the desperate task of fulfilling it. He began cautiously to speak of a divine messenger who was wont to repeat the very words of Allah to an appointed Apostle. All three participants in this mystic intercourse he conceived Judaistically, seeing his own part as that of a Prophet according to the Hebrews. The fixed usage of

centuries compels us thus to translate the title he claimed; but it were better rendered 'Apostle', so that foreknowledge and foretelling which, in our common parlance, attach to prophecy might be relegated to a secondary place. For, in practice, Muhammad made little claim to share the prescience which lay behind the communications of the Archangel, and committed himself very rarely to a guess at the future of this world. Even if the paucity of his recorded forecasts be due in part to editorial elimination and to oblivion, he seems to have done little more prophesying than ordinary men who talk with loose confidence about things to come.

Like most apostles before and since, he addressed himself at the outset to those, for whom the existing dispensation did so little that promises in another world of all that was being denied them in this would be likely to make a strong appeal. With such he relied chiefly on a pledge of equality in this life, and a revelation of life after death; and if he adapted his picture to the taste and desire of his hearers, he did no worse than many another preacher who has sincerely believed in his end. When conscious imposture is imputed to his earlier ministry, it should be borne in mind that the histories of Christian hermits and other visionaries, who have lived lives of contemplation under conditions of climate and scene not dissimilar from those of central Arabia, witness to genuine illusions of supernatural appearances far more fantastic than his. Given the imagined manifestation, words, expressing ideas which were possessing at the moment the visionary's own mind, will be attributed to it. The phraseology of Muhammad's earliest *suras* is Judaic, emanating from a mind profoundly

convinced that only so does God speak. It is on record that he was frightened by his first visions; but when presently they ceased during a considerable interval, he became deeply depressed. He may have been an epileptic, as has been held by non-Muslimin; at the same time, it is undeniable that often he produced intentionally in himself the very symptoms of snoring, sanguine suffusion followed by livid pallor, trance, and violent sweating, on which the diagnosis of his epilepsy is based. The authentic history of many a wonder-worker demonstrates that it is not necessary to suppose all the 'miracles' pretended by an individual—least of all his earliest—to have been conscious impostures because some can be proved so. When spirits, which have come to a half-conscious call, must be summoned for any and every occasion, the thaumaturge may feign without impairing his own belief that he has had, and will have again, genuine visions; memory of the latter may even impair his sense of the unreality of his fictions.

About a year before Muhammad was ripe for the apostolate he had become intimate with one Abu Bakr, a man of means engaged in mercantile ventures. This friend was a genial sympathetic soul, capable of whole-hearted devotion, and endowed with much practical ability. Accepting, for whatever reason, Muhammad's inspiration, he shared with the Apostle's wife the credit of being the first believer; and he was used, when the hour struck, as chief, and at first sole, agent for conversions, likely souls being kept away from the Master till known to be all but won. Then they often found him veiled; for aloofness and some apparatus of mystery have ever seemed politic to founders

of faiths. Progress was slow. The propagation of an Idea, unpopular with established authority, precluded any but secret steps. A year brought but three converts, one of them a slave ; and the authority of the Koran and the contempt expressed a little later by Meccan public opinion assure us that, with few and doubtful exceptions, the Faithful of the Prophet's early period were of mean estate. Muhammad seems to have met would-be converts in all sorts of places, often in the open desert and, after a while, seldom or never in his own dwelling. A house on the hillock of Safa, belonging to one el-Arkam, soon became the habitual meeting-place. The new sect must have grown more quickly after the first year ; for eighty-three families of professing Believers fled to Abyssinia, in, it is said, the fifth year, and, in addition to these, many, besides the Prophet's own relatives, faced their trouble out at home. Allowing five souls to a family we may guess that six hundred, and probably more, had accepted Muhammad by the close of 613.

Some time before this date the secret was out in Mecca, exciting growing apprehension among those who lived of the city's altar. Annoyance succeeded to the indifference with which presumptuous low-born sectaries and a crazy leader had thus far been regarded. Vaguely called 'Hanif' by some, the sect was becoming better known as 'Muslim'. The first name was connected with the Patriarch Abraham and, perhaps, conveyed a popular imputation of Judaism. The second name, which in pre-Islamic usage implied dishonour, was to be purged by the limitation of its meaning to surrender to God. As has often been observed, there is an echo in both names of that

Maslama of the Beni Hanifa, who was the contemporary champion of Monotheism in Najd; and it is possible that, since the one name could mean 'heathen' or 'hypocrite' and the other 'betrayer', both were applied to Muhammad and his followers by non-believers who confounded them with Najdean enemies of the Established Church. Some also, making a similar confusion with Christian monotheists, called them Subba or Sabians.

We hear of much petty persecution and some violence in the early days; but of no official punishment of the sect except by an exclusion from the precinct of the Kaaba which followed, at what interval we do not know, a public promulgation of the new creed. This is said to have been made in the precinct by Muhammad himself with the not surprising consequence of a tumult, in which a stepson gave his life for the Master's. Various attempts to induce the Hashimite clan to exclude Muhammad from the tribal pale broke against the opposition of his uncle, Abu Talib. Though no believer, this tolerant notable would not sacrifice family honour in a cause which he failed to find vital to the common interest. Then, as later, extreme reluctance to divide a community, whose prosperity had more than any other in the Peninsula to gain from tribal peace, restrained hands that would have struck down a public enemy. But less well protected believers grew more than uneasy, and in the fifth year of the Mission began to move out of the city and make for Monotheistic territory. Since the west coast of the Red Sea was within easier reach by sail than the farther side of the Central deserts by camel, eighty-three Muslim families slipped across to Axum, to

shelter with the Lion of Judah. A few of these refugees would become Christians: the rest held miserably to their Faith, hoping for return; and among these was one of Muhammad's first-cousins, Jafar, son of Abu Talib.

Secession of half a thousand persons to a Monotheistic sovereign was a new thing in Meccan experience, and disquieted a community not over strong in fighting men and remarkably jealous of foreign interference with its polytheistic cult. An embassy was sent in all haste to the Negus to get the untoward incident closed by the exiles' return; but that prince, who had little sympathy with polytheists, was persuaded easily by Jafar and the rest to refuse constraint, and the embassy had to take its presents back to Mecca with the unwelcome news that the Negus considered its new faith better than the old. Thus the mischief was but made worse. Malcontents had the ear of a Monotheist power and Muhammad was become a personage in favour with an alien king. Moreover, now or about now he had won the man whom he desired most to convert, and prized most when converted—Omar, of his own tribe, an acknowledged leader in Mecca, not lightly braved by any of his fellows. When Muslimin began to go boldly in the marketplace and even the precinct of the Kaaba, the conservatives agreed to try to breach the Hashimite fence which protected the leader of this sedition.

If a clan would not put a member outside the law it was open to the tribe, by recognized but rare usage, to outlaw its clan. This measure was no more than a boycott, which imposed segregation but not necessarily starvation, and suspended rights of intermarriage and

common trade, but not the right to live. Therefore it need create no blood-feud. Sentence was passed on the Hashimites; but Abu Talib stood fast, and the outlawed clansmen gathered into the valley in which his house stood. There they abode for two or three years, enduring more spiritual than material inconvenience: for too many members of other clans in Mecca were in secret sympathy with the Muslimin (who seem not to have been confined to their valley by any force) to let them be without the means of life. Gradually passions on both sides cooled towards compromise. The Ban weakened the whole community: the situation of him who had provoked it grew daily more invidious. Muhammad was given to understand that the notables would be content to save their faces, but looked to him to move. Fearful of the ultimate shipwreck of his religious and political ideals, he saw immediate interest in surrender. He was admitted to the precinct of the Kaaba, to bless all its gods and goddesses: the roll of the Ban was torn down from the sacred wall; and outwardly the community became again one.

It was a peace where no peace could be. For Muhammad to keep it was to abdicate; and a mutiny of his zealots can hardly have been needed to induce him to recant. The city was split again between persecutors and persecuted. The Ban had availed too little to be re-enacted; but seeing that Abu Talib, like Khadija, had died opportunely, leaving the Prophet less protected than of old, the authorities hoped his removal might now be compassed without involving another schism or another life. Muhammad saw all hope of peaceful

success at an end. Discredited by his recent surrender, he could scarcely retain old followers, whom he was powerless to protect (the Refugees had been forced to go a second time to Abyssinia), and he seems to have abandoned all attempt to make new ones, pending discovery of some way to restore his credit. Persecuted in one city, he repaired to another. Feeling he must look to the Gentiles he visited Taif, but made no headway. Some Khazraj tribesmen of Yathrib, worsted in the internecine warfare between its Yemenite tribes, which after the day of Buwath, in A.D. 616, left the rival Aus tribe and its Jewish allies victorious, had already sounded the new Meccan party after rejection by the old. Conversations took place during successive Pilgrimages, the Khazraj, for their part, stumbling at the moral commandments of the new creed—its prohibition of theft, adultery, child-murder, and falsehood; while Muhammad, on his side, was slow to break with his native city and stand in with defeated aliens. But, as his home ties weakened, the state of Yathrib grew more encouraging. It is clear from the temper of this town, a little later, when the first Moslems reached it, that the Aus and the local Jews, as well as the Khazraj, desired respite from internal strife. They had entered upon a recurrent phase of tribal societies, in which, from utter weariness of blood, all parties, disgusted with the gods of their own market-place, look outside for a peace-maker. The Yathribites being without ordered civic life envied what their pilgrims saw in Mecca. A movement in favour of Islam began, and, after a Pilgrimage which was attended by a dozen converts of the Khazraj, Muhammad was induced to send

a missionary to their community. A few Meccan Muslimin went with him. The new faith quickened in fresh soil; even some chiefs of the Aus confessed, and approved iconoclasm. A year later Yathrib sent five times as many Muslimin to the Meccan Feast; and such good guarantees did these offer that enough Meccan families emigrated to revive the apprehensions excited by the Abyssinian secession. Muhammad himself, it was reported, had been invited to Yathrib. If he might have been a peril at the court of the Negus, would he not be a worse in the town which commanded the northern caravan-routes? A pledge was taken in secret of the Kuraish notables, and delegates of all were commissioned to share murder for the good of all. But Ali was found in Muhammad's bed. The Prophet had slipped with Abu Bakr through the latter's house into the waste. After three days spent in a cave south of the city, the fugitives got down to the pools of Asfan on the Pilgrim Road; thence, pushing northward day after day by side-tracks and hill-paths, they came at last to Kuba, in the palm-gardens south of Yathrib, on the 24th of September 622, a date from which all Muslimin would reckon time in the ages to come.

By adopting (half a generation later) this Hijra or Flight for its Era, and neglecting the dates of either its founder's birth or his first entry upon his apostolic mission, Islam signified that, for its purpose, temporal power is essential to spiritual, and means to the former are means to the latter. At Yathrib Islam was to become what the world has recognized it to be ever since—a combatant polity, wielding the sword of Allah upon earth. Such had not been

its founder's original ideal. A Meccan reluctant to shed blood, he had hoped, before the Ban, to win by peaceful penetration first his city, and then the alien Arabs who resorted to it. We hear of a 'Sword of the Faith' in an oath administered to the pilgrim-converts from Yathrib, but not of its use to enforce confession till some time after the flight; nor was the Faith accepted at first as valid reason for drawing it in defiance of tribal law, except in self-defence, as the attitude of the Yathribite Moslems—the Ansar, 'Helpers', as they were called—towards the Prophet's first guerrilla would demonstrate. Nor is there evidence that, after arrival at Yathrib, either Muhammad or his fellow exiles contemplated any war but a tribal one with Mecca, or any object beyond the realization of the leader's original ideal, the dominance of that city. Even much later, when success and the growth of professional militarism had widened the scope of their warfare, operations were directed wholly to winning Mecca. It is unproved and most improbable that Muhammad, until he had taken Mecca and had hardly more than two years left of life, ever dreamed of a temporal sway more extensive than would secure to Hejaz, dominated by himself, the independent control of the area which furnished it with pilgrims, and admitted to foreign marts. It was the adhesion of Bedawins, following that metropolitan success, which finally compelled adventure outside Arabia. Muhammad may have had some inkling in his final year of the coming necessity; but, in any case, he left it to his successor to face.

The uncritical piety of Believers has credited Islam

with full growth at the moment of birth; and some non-believers have ascribed to its Prophet a foreknowledge of his own system and its destiny, which would be consistent only with their acceptance of him as what he himself professed to be—the directly inspired of God. He was plainly not less a creature of circumstances than any other great man, and his ends and means underwent progressive development. Even an idea so essential to the developed system of Islam as temporal sovereignty was of slow growth in his mind and late fulfilment. Probably, it was hardly older than its unexpected realization—that is to say, Muhammad, having gone to Yathrib without expectation of sovereignty, never contemplated it before he found himself placed, after his victory at Badr, by the superior intelligence and the political and military qualities of the Refugees, in a position to exercise it forthwith. Certainly he was not received or installed, on arrival at Yathrib, as a king; nor was the penury, in which he and his followers had to live there for two years, nor, again, was the attitude during that time not only of the non-believing Yathribites—the so-called 'Hypocrites', who were a large majority of the population—and of the Jews, but also of the believing 'Helpers', consistent with regal consideration. He seems at first to have been no more than tolerated as an arbiter or referee in disputes, and as leader of a band of guests, who might be useful on occasion, but were found irksome when the occasion tarried.

§ 3. *The Prophet as King*

MEANWHILE propagation of the new creed by Abu Bakr and his zealots was not discouraged by anything worse than outspoken criticism; but in this the local Jews were so insistent that the Muslim Prophet, to his sorrow as much as his anger, began to fear for his own dispensation, if it were not dissociated from theirs. To judaize in Mecca had entailed no social stigma, and had clothed him with a certain prestige: but in Yathrib it would involve him with an inferior element in the local population and, moreover, in some spiritual contempt; for here lived Jews enough, knowing Judaism better than he, to make great stir among Muslimin, should his claim to be in the succession of Jehovah's prophets be denied by Jehovah's people. Cautious experiments and overtures convinced him of an increasing danger, and in his second year at Yathrib he turned to the Gentiles, bidding his followers face about in prayer, eyes towards Mecca and backs to Jerusalem, and swore not merely to ignore Jews, but to attack them when means should serve.

For the moment, Muhammad's means barely sufficed to inaugurate that interference with communications, upon which rested all hope of forcing Mecca to accept his creed and himself. Short of men—for the 'Helpers' would not join in attacking Meccans—and shorter of camels and provisions, he could equip no more than handfuls of raiders to beset the roads. His Refugees waylaid in Wadi Ais a Meccan caravan from Syria, which was cutting across towards the main Pilgrim Road, south-west of Yathrib; but they were warned off it by the

local Juhaina tribesmen. Another caravan was reported near Rabugh, but it was too strong to be attacked. A third was missed at Kharrar south of Yambo, and a fourth to the north of Yathrib, though Muhammad himself led the raiders. Other attempts in the autumn of 623 had no better fortune; and the exasperated exiles saw the Sacred Truce about to begin in December and nothing achieved. Why, after all, respect that Truce? It was of the Old Order, not the New. A very small band, reduced on the march by more than one desertion, went southwards with orders to violate, if need should be, the Peace of Polytheism. It came upon a knot of unsuspecting merchants faring with a few laden camels, and took these, killing a man of Hadramaut who had lived under Meccan protection. This act made a blood-feud with Meccan kin; but the Refugees accepted the situation and divided the spoil, pending a greater prize to be fought for in the early spring, the rich caravan of Abu Sufian, chief of the Umayyad Kuraish, due to return from Syria. Its leader, however, got wind of their purpose before he was abreast of the Dead Sea, changed his route and sent on an express to Mecca; and Muhammad, having come down the Pilgrim Road with three hundred Muslimin (including, for the first time, Yathribites to the number of sixty), in hope of swooping out of Wadi Safra on the caravan, learned first, that his prey had taken another road, and next, that a Meccan force sent to support it had still to repass. Of about twice the Muslim strength, this force survived from a larger array, most of which had turned back homewards on hearing that the caravan was no longer in danger; and it was led now by

the protector of the slain Hadrami, out to avenge blood. It is reported that the Prophet, seeing but little booty in prospect, doubted whether to await the Meccans, but was over-persuaded by his Yathribites; and also that, in sight of the enemy, he made a vain overture to compound the blood-feud. The two forces came to grips on or about the 16th March (the date of Badr is very uncertain) on the sandy plain, into which Wadi Safra issues from the foot-hills of Jebel Subh. We know little of the first battle of Islam except its issue and effect. It began at daybreak, with such a customary contest of chosen champions as would remain dear to popular armies down to the Middle Ages; and when the three Meccan fighters had fallen, it was developed with promiscuous charges of Meccan camelry, cavalry, and footmen. Their efforts, failing to stampede the obedient Muslimin massed by the Prophet himself in a solid formation as at prayer, exhausted man and beast. The day was hot. The Meccans had the less discipline and the less water. Under the midday sun they turned about, and the Muslimin, rushing out for the first time, struck at their unarmoured backs, till they scattered to the four winds. Seventy Meccans fell alive into their pursuers' hands and more were dead. Sons had fought with fathers, and every tie of kinship was violated. Some prisoners were butchered; but most were spared when the Prophet reminded his followers of their own wives and children still to be redeemed from Mecca. The Muslim dead received the honours of martyrdom, and the site of their tombs is revered still; Muslim survivors were to be honoured throughout life. One or two days later Muhammad set forth again for Yathrib to disappoint the

Jews who had anticipated his defeat. He had prevailed by a discipline new to Arabia in the most signal combat of his generation; and potentially he was a Priest King.

This day of Badr deserves, in fact, the fame, which the Muslim world has accorded to it, because the Prophet's triumph, by turning the scale decisively in his favour at Yathrib, and giving him temporal power, endowed Islam with a kingdom of this world. Before Badr it was a religion in a state: afterwards, it was not only a state religion, but itself a state. A new political power was established in Arabia, and none was more alive to the fact than the Meccan chiefs. The metropolitan position and very life of their city as a commercial community were compromised, if a polity organized to subvert theirs remained in control of the northward roads and in contact with the central tribes. The Prophet lost no time in advertising his new authority. At last he could deal with Yathribite malcontents, Arab and Jew; at last end the misery of the Muslimin; at last enforce his social code upon a whole community. For the first time he dared decree prohibition of strong drink, and for the first time dispossess Yathribites for Refugees. Seven hundred families of the Jewish Beni Kainuka were turned into the desert, and their houses and lands granted to Muslimin. Word went forth through Arabia that, where Islam was, the law of the ages had passed away, and a hand would turn against every man who did not believe. Mecca suspended all tribal differences, pooled the profits of the last Syrian convoy, and equipped over a thousand camelry. Abu Sufian took the lead, and marched on Yathrib by a western road.

Muhammad, lord as yet only of the town, had no choice but wait. Even when Abu Sufian's column appeared in the western gardens he is said to have been counselled by some Unbelievers, serving under his orders, not to give battle at all to so strong a force. But his power was too new to risk inaction, where 'Hypocrites' and Jews might play false, and even Believers take hardly the devastation of the oasis. Therefore, reminding all and sundry of Badr, he went out to engage the Meccan raiders before they should get round to the best fields through the difficult belt between the northern wall and the rocks of Mt. Uhud. He seems, as at Badr, to have chosen his position with a strategist's eye, having Uhud on his right flank and at his back, and a thin screen of archers to keep his left from being turned on the side of the town, close by whose walls the enemy was unlikely to venture. His force reached the position unmolested and fell into the ordered line which had won Badr. Challenges and single combats opened the day; Hamza, the Prophet's uncle, fell; but the Muslim line came forward and the invaders gave way. Their retreat became rout; women rushed screaming out of the Meccan camp, and the victors, entering the tents, fell to rapine and plunder in the sight of their own archers on the rising ground to their left. Such a spectacle was too much for Arab cupidity, as many an Arabian leader has found to his cost when victory seemed assured. The bowmen deserted their position and rushed down to share the spoil. A Meccan leader, Khalid ibn Walid, who would live to greater days, saw the door open, galloped his horsemen round the flank, and fell on the disordered rear

of the exultant Muslimin, saving the day. Muhammad's followers scattered in their turn; the Prophet, wounded like Ali, Omar, and Abu Bakr, was reported dead, but in fact was rescued and concealed in a gully, till he could be carried home. The day was lost by Islam. But, as often in Arab warfare, success was not pushed home. All but some hundred and fifty of the Yathribite force got back by nightfall, and no attack was made on the town. Whether the report of Muhammad's death was accepted by Abu Sufian for truth; whether the rout earlier in the day had weakened the latter seriously; whether he sincerely believed in Muslim reserves; whether he would show that he had come out against Muslimin, not against Yathrib; or whether he was an inconstant, unpersevering Arab, who having won honour, itched to be home to enjoy it—whatever his motive, he made off in the dark, leaving most of the Yathribite oasis intact, and Muhammad, who recovered sufficiently to mount a horse next morning, free to follow up and make a fresh show of defiance, to which the Meccans offered no effective reply. The net result was that, while the material loss of the Muslimin and Yathribites was smaller than had been expected, the Prophet could repair his loss of prestige. What had gone wrong in the battle was notoriously not by his orders. What had gone right was his work. Uhud did not efface Badr, whose memory is said to have decided the Meccans not to turn about when they learned that Muhammad was still very much alive.

He had seennearly the last of their offensives. A Meccan force came northward next year as far as Badr, but turned

back for lack, it is said, of supplies; and the last attempt was made in A.D. 627. Abu Sufian this time took the high inland road and approached Yathrib from the east, his first objective, no doubt, being the large gardens on that side of the town. Muhammad, forewarned, had covered them with a long dike and ditch, famed in later Muslim story as the *Khandak* (a Persian word meaning 'Trench'). Primitive though this work of defence was, its novelty baffled Abu Sufian until, at the end of a month of chill spring weather, during which a promised rising within the town failed to break out, and the food expected from the gardens could not be obtained, his large force refused to persevere. It went home in April, leaving the Prophet to settle with the last malcontents in Yathrib, of whom some individuals, both Arabs and Jews, had welcomed the Meccan attack and anticipated, if not worked for, its success. Since the day of Uhud a second tribe of Jews, the Beni Nadir, had followed the Kainuka into exile, after standing siege for three weeks in their houses. Now it was the turn of the Beni Kuraiza. Starved out of their houses after many days' blockade, they were the first body of Islam's foes (the men of full age at least) to be offered the alternatives of apostasy or death, and to refuse, with very few exceptions, the first.

Yathrib was Muhammad's now for good and all, and it may be called henceforth by its new name, el-Medina—City of Cities. Moreover, no longer only there was his power acknowledged. There had been trouble with Bedawin tribes after the day of Uhud, especially with the Sulaim, ancestors of the modern Harb, among whom the

Prophet's aegis had not saved his missionaries ; but, after the triumph of the ' Trench ', we hear that these tribesmen adopted the faith, for which they would fight valiantly after two years at Hunain. Others were coerced by columns of mounted Muslimin, who by such constant exercise took on more and more the character of regular soldiers. In the Prophet's choice of objectives a continuous policy of blocking Meccan caravan-roads to the north and assuming their control himself may be traced. The Beni Lihyan, who were dealt with in the winter of 627, have the same name as the authors of sculptures and inscriptions in the critical pass of el-Ula, through which the great north road then ran, as runs nowadays the Hejaz railway. They were a lettered folk who had taken from the Nabatheans a civilization superior to the Bedawin, and, being perhaps of Aramaean descent, favoured trade. Muhammad was not prepared yet to deal with the head-quarters of their tribe ; but he threw down his gage by clearing their colony off the Pilgrim Road near Asfan, about fifty miles from Mecca.

Almost everywhere successful from a secure base round a wide radius, which reached almost to Mecca, Muhammad resolved to make a bid for the realization of the great object of his life at that city itself. He gave out to Muslimin that, come the Holy Month, he would make the Pilgrimage with all who cared to follow. Some of the Refugees could not find transport ; more feared their blood-foes ; most were startled by an unexpected move of doubtful purpose and issue. But seven hundred or so (some say twice that number) made ready, of whom all, except perhaps Muhammad's intimates, expected to fight. As for

thePropheт, he doubtlessproposed to himself from the first no more than the pompous demonstration, with which, in fact, the venture ended a few miles from the Holy City.

He could not hope to be suffered in Mecca without a struggle ; and, apart from perils of street fighting, of which Arabs were and are particularly shy, every reason of policy forbade him either to raid the city or occupy it in arms. But if Mecca was to be taken from within—by a slide of public opinion towards Islam—it were worth while to risk a demonstration that the Monotheist society, which could kill the Pilgrimage, only wished, after all, to promote it. Muhammad halted at Hudaibiya, compelling his reluctant followers to hold their hand : a *parlementaire* came out from the Kuraish, and a future Caliph, Uthman, of the Umayyad clan, was sent in to talk to the citizens. Torn between fear of these Pilgrims and fear for Pilgrimages to come, and conscious of many Muslim partisans and more waverers in their midst, the city's leaders temporized. Muhammad should not enter now ; but if he would go in peace, he should enjoy that peace for ten years, and, after twelve months, be suffered, with any unarmed men he might bring, to stay three days in the city emptied of all but Muslimin. Though his zealots objected that, in this pact, he was not recognized for God's Apostle, Muhammad ratified it, and, to complete his demonstration, forced his men to perform with himself the ceremonies incumbent on would-be pilgrims. Then he turned his face to Medina, leaving the promise of the pact and the memory of his pomp and power to be canvassed in Mecca for a year.

During the time of waiting he might not raid Meccan caravans, and had best not provoke pagans; but still he must provide for the soldiery of Islam. No more Jews remained in Medina to be thrown to its mercies, but an old colony, including recent refugees, still flourished untouched at Khaibar, three long days' camel ride to the north-east, on the brink of Najd. In its arable valleys, which run, like fronds of a palm (says Doughty), into a lava-capped highland of many springs, the Jews had mud-built villages and gardens. Two months after his return to Medina, the Prophet marshalled a flying column to put into effect once more the recognized principle of his polity, that Muslimin might take all good things of earth. Avoiding contact with intervening Bedawins, the column reached Khaibar, and laid siege to walled villages; but from ignorance of better engines than bows and spears, it had to wait without till hunger and fatigue should breed treachery. One by one the towers surrendered and their booty enriched the Muslimin. But Muhammad, seeing that he could not convert the Jews to his Faith, or spare Muslimin from Medina to cultivate their distant fields, chose to compromise, rather than abolish a source of supplies to his state; and in the end the Jews were permitted to stay on their lands, if they would render the half of their yearly produce. The operations had been followed with lively interest by distant communities, being regarded as both critical for the new Medinese power, and, if successful, significant of what the rest of Arabia might expect of it. When the news of the Prophet's victory and concession reached Taima, a hundred miles north, its Jews came

forward with an offer of submission on the same terms.

After the return from Khaibar—though some think earlier, and some even after another Pilgrimage—Muhammad took a step which, however, the tradition of it be discounted, was significant enough to justify the impression it has made on the imagination of posterity. He wrote letters as a Priest King to lords, small and great, of foreign lands bordering his own, to warn each and all that the Old Order in Arabia had passed away, the New Order would respect none of its obligations, and the single way of peace was to accept the Faith and render its Alms. The princes of the monotheistic Beni Hanifa on the eastern confines of the Medinese state, and those of Yemen, to the south, were certainly so challenged. They replied variously, but, for the most part, unsatisfactorily; and the last years of the Prophet would be filled with a series of missions and expeditions into those quarters, in which recourse had often to be made to his *ultima ratio* of arms. Duma and the north of the Peninsula generally had accepted him already; but he wrote now the first of a series of letters to the Prince of Ghassan, whose territory offered the nearest field adequate to satisfy the growing lusts of the Muslim militia. There seems little doubt that, with a view to raids on Sinai, a letter was sent also into Egypt, and that its Byzantine governor, not wanting trouble with wild Arabs on his eastern border, returned a civil reply and some presents, including Mary, a Coptic girl, whose beauty was to lead to trouble in the Prophet's harem. It is less certain, however, whether the other missives,

believed by later tradition to have been sent to the Negus of Abyssinia, the Sasanian King of Persia, and the Emperor Heraclius, were ever penned : if indeed they were, it is even less certain what was the tenor of the several replies. Nothing is recorded of any answer from the Negus. The Persian is said to have returned a summons to Muhammad to appear and justify himself to his lawful suzerain ; the Emperor, to have made no reply but to have considered the letter with the politic temper of an opportunist who was at war with Persia and might need Arabs.

If letters were really sent to these greater potentates, they do not necessarily argue the existence of any conception and intention of world-empire in the mind of the Founder of Islam. Their peremptory tenor was but the logical form in which an Only Apostle of an Only God must address any believer in another god. Their purpose plainly was to provide, by denunciation of old suzerainties and treaties and by notice of defiance, for formal right of future access to all border-lands, which it might be necessary, in the interests of the Muslim soldiery and state, to plunder. Muhammad was well on the way to pan-Arabism (he is said to have formulated its ideal with his dying breath), but he did not live to be an Imperialist.

He would not let the next Pilgrimage go by without claiming his right under the Pact of the year before ; and with two hundred Muslimin, armed against treachery, and twelve hundred unarmed, he rode south to receive his due from the Kuraish. They did not oppose ; and the Prophet, leaving his soldiers on a commanding hill-top,

went down in peace into the deserted precinct of the Kaaba. Nothing untoward seems to have marred his display of piety and patriotism (unless it be a true tradition that he was refused admission to the Kaaba itself and access to the Black Stone), and he withdrew in peace, under pressure from the Kuraish, when the three days were fulfilled, leaving no doubt in Meccan minds that he was friendly to the chief institution of the town. Many wavered: some confessed Islam and followed him up to Medina, among these being two destined to great fame, Khalid ibn Walid, who was to win Syria for Islam, and Amr el-As, who would conquer Egypt. A little later came Abbas, the Prophet's uncle and the eponymous founder of a Caliphial family. Even unbelievers conciliated the coming King. The fires of Polytheism were paling, and Muḥammad could wait a little longer in certain hope of his day.

As before, he had to fill in the time by exercising his soldiery in profitable raids. But now he could expect no sufficient booty nearer than the Byzantine border. To harry Ghassan, even in its day of decline, called for a military effort beyond any he had yet made; and he gathered three thousand riders, who were bidden take satisfaction from Bostra for the murder of one of the bearers of his letters in the previous year. News of their objective, however, went ahead and the Muslimin, on arrival at Maan, heard that the fighting tribesmen of trans-Jordan had been called out to help the regular troops of Ghassan to cover Bostra. Faced, at Muta, by a Christian array for the first time, the Prophet's men hesitated, went forward, backward, and forward again. In

the end they had to take a lesson, not lost on Khalid, who, promoted from the ranks to command in the hour of defeat, pulled the broken Muslimin out of trouble, and saved them and himself against another day. The beaten raiders re-entered Medina late in the year 629 to find preparations afoot for a third and (it was to prove) last expedition of Muslimin to a pagan Mecca. Forestalling the Pilgrimage by several weeks, the Prophet would go in force and armed; and knowing the effect of numbers on Arab imagination, he mustered wellnigh all his fighting strength. If this now numbered ten thousand, as is said, the Muslim 'snowball' had been rolling latterly to some purpose. As a pretext for fighting, if fighting was to be, he had the recent murder of one of his protected tribesmen in the Kaaba precinct; but also, for assurance that in all likelihood no fighting in force would take place, he had knowledge of the slide of Meccan opinion for two years past. The best of the Kuraish were already his: the rest needed but one push more. The city was virtually taken as soon as it was known that he was on the march towards it. Abu Sufian himself brought out its submission and surrendered himself to the invincible Faith; a knot of die-hards was brushed off a hill-top; and the son of Abdullah advanced into Mecca as a sovereign, to purge the Kaaba of images, but to increase its area and its wealth. He left its keys with the holder, as he left the houses that his Refugees could have claimed, and demanding but two lives for the murder he had to avenge, he wrote off the rest of the score.

Muhammad had come into his own, and as his own he

dealt with Mecca, compelling many reforms, which seem to us so far above the standard of his race and time that we marvel at his abstention from others. Consecrating the whole town a sanctuary, he decreed the abolition of the blood-feud everywhere for ever—it was a political and economic necessity of both his secular state and the destiny he proposed for his religious capital, now proclaimed the best place on earth. Wonderful it is that he could cancel, even for a moment, so immemorial and fundamental a condition of tribal society, and even more wonderful that his cancellation continued to be observed far beyond Mecca and long after his age. Further, he forbade any man in that wild land to torture or mutilate not only his kind, but even his beast; but since he himself twice ordered criminal hands to be cut off, subsequent princes in Arabia, great and small, have always held mutilation licensed to powers that be. He prohibited infanticide, which previously had been left to the discretion of the father and even counted to him for virtue, if practised upon feminine offspring; and for the first time personal rights were secured to women and slaves.

But if Muhammad was the most advanced of the Arabs, he was still an Arab of his age. While he confounded all tribal gods of the Arabs into One and that a Spirit, he could not ignore—he even acknowledged—the utility of ceremonial means to spiritual ends. At Medina he had given much thought to the institution of ritual, and it is said he confessed an incurable hankering to kiss again the Black Stone of the Kaaba. Idols were anathema if they stood for other gods than the One; but, believing in the existence of countless supernatural

beings below God (as indeed Christians have believed at all periods), he held it would be to the greater honour of Allah were he to bring the memorials of their earthly manifestation and honour into subjection to, and harmony with, His worship.

Muhammad had, however, too short a time in Mecca to see much fruit of his labour: for on some account, which we can only guess, some of the strongest Hejaz tribes chose this moment to band together and strike a first and last blow for the old order of tribal freedom and tribal gods. The leaders were those old foes of Mecca, the Hawazin tribe, and with it marched, among others, the Thakif tribe, which possessed then, as now, the town of Taif, Mecca's local rival. The composition of the force, indeed, suggests that fear lest Mecca, joined to Medina, should impose on the tribes a temporal rule unknown before was the chief motive of its aggression. It is said to have gathered when the Prophet's intention to leave Medina in full force had first became known, but to have let him pass to the south.

If we knew where Hunain, the point at which eventually he brought the federation to battle, was situated, we might understand better the obscure tactics. It has been agreed to place it somewhere near Mecca, on the south-east, apparently because the Thakif took part, and because a march of five stages by the Prophet's army to Taif, recorded by Muslim historians, is presumed to have started from the battle-field. But neither Hunain nor any other place-name mentioned in connexion with the battle is known in that region; whereas the field and its martyrs are commemorated now at

Badr-Hunain, near the mouth of Wadi Safra, and the pass, 'Majaz', over which the tribes are recorded to have come down to the fight, may well be that still so called to the east of Wadi Safra (it became familiar to our Military Intelligence Service during the Sherifian fighting for Medina in 1917). If Hunain were really in the Harb country, on the western Pilgrim Road, over two hundred miles north of Mecca and within seventy of Medina, it would follow that what was planned and attempted by the Hawazin and its allies was the cutting of the Prophet's communications with his base.

Wherever Hunain may have been, the tribes met the Prophet there with their women, children, and flocks according to Bedawin custom. The fight seems to have been a repetition of Badr with much larger forces on both sides. The undisciplined tribesmen, after a first success, wore themselves out against the ordered Muslim square standing round the Prophet ready for martyrdom; and exhausted at the last, they were counter-attacked by Muslim irregulars, notably the Beni Sulaim, broken and scattered. The Thakif, severely punished, made for Taif, and the Muslim army, without waiting at Mecca to divide its booty, followed up and laid siege to the town for some twenty days. Though some primitive engines were brought against the wall, Taif so obstinately kept its besiegers out (as manned defences usually keep out Arabs to this day) that Muhammad, who preferred to take towns from within, elected to call off his men and go back to Mecca. Thence he made haste to Medina, forestalling any possible recrudescence of trouble with the Hawazin by bribing its lately rebellious leader, Malik ibn Auf,

to accept Islam with the remnant of his beaten clans. He re-entered his capital in peace, having been absent some three months in all.

The rest of Muhammad's history is a brief epilogue to the conquest of Mecca. This entailed automatic consequences over a wide area. Now that the Priest King of Medina held also the metropolitan city, and disposed of a mobile force greater and more effective than any other chief could collect, the petty Arab powers hastened to forestall his possible raids and secure their admission to future pilgrimages. Delegations from Najd, from Bahrain, even from Oman and Yemen, presented themselves at Muhammad's lowly lodging, to do as their descendants would do, whenever a major luminary should appear in the Arabian sky, whether a Sultan of Turks, or a Viceroy of Egypt, or a King of Hejaz. Coming, not to change their hearts, but to bargain for immunity, they found hard the terms of a prince who would not content himself with presents or promise of tribute, but bade them break their idols, cease from feud, and receive vicegerents of himself. Few of the delegations consented willingly; but too many consented for any openly to refuse and draw Muslim cavalry on to their homes. Some tribes, however, would not ratify their envoys' pledges; others (as the Beni Tamim of Najd), after accepting Islam and its prince with their lips, failed to remit the Alms to Medina; more had sent no envoys. Therefore, after all, Muhammad found it expedient to send a formal ultimatum to the Bedawins in general, giving them four months' grace to accept Islam, or feel the weight of his hand. Among communities that had

made no overtures were evidently some in the north, who depended on Ghassan and the Byzantines; and to bring these to reason, a large expeditionary force, led by Muhammad himself, went up late in the year 630 through the Thamud country to Tebuk, and thence dispatched columns towards Duma (Jauf el-Amr) on the one hand, and the Dead Sea district on the other. The main body met no resistance, while flying columns prevailed on the Christians of Duma to apostatize, and compelled other Christians and Jews on the Gulf of Akaba and as far north as Maan, to promise tribute for a promise of protection, which would entail something like serfdom. But, with Ghassan close by and Byzantine soldiery hardly less far away, such protection proved nominal (the governor of Maan was crucified when the Muslimin had withdrawn); and the tribute was remitted so irregularly, that the Prophet would find it necessary to equip yet another army for those parts, as the last military measure of his life.

Meanwhile his absence, with so much of his fighting strength, had bred transient unrest in Medina itself, where, it appears, the northern powers kept secret agents. A tentative movement to leaven Islamic Monotheism with Byzantine was supported by a few of the 'Hypocrites'; but it had not gone far enough to give the returned Prophet serious trouble. On the other hand, fresh delegations arriving from the Beni Thakif and from Yemen assured him of the spread of his Faith elsewhere. Taif was taken after all from within; but Muhammad, mindful of its stubborn walls, asked no more of it as yet than confession of his faith and rejection of idols,

leaving all else to the growth of its Islamic conscience. To the Christians of Najran he showed scant favour. Their independent Monotheism, impairing the Oneness he desired throughout Arabia, might be a danger; and he imposed heavy tribute and acceptance of a Muslim agent. To the Pilgrimage of 631 he did not go in person, but sent Abu Bakr, and not till the following spring did he set out in person for Mecca again with all his household and the largest concourse of the Faithful that had yet ridden unarmed from Medina. Whatever other effect had been achieved by his ultimatum to the Bedawins, no pagan dared show himself this year at the Kaaba. The Pilgrimage of 632 was a purely Muslim gathering; and for that reason and because the Prophet was never to lead another, his practice on this occasion governs immutably the ceremonial of the Haj. The Kingdom of God was accomplished, and His Apostle might depart in peace. Muhammad is said to have been failing in health when he re-entered Medina in the late spring. At no time very robust, according to the testimony of Ayesha, who saw most of his middle life, he had taxed to the utmost both body and brain for many years. A little longer he could still receive deputations and order preparations for another northern expedition; but some disease, of what nature we do not know, was overtaking his strength. A crisis of fever began on a day reckoned to have been Thursday, 4 June 632, and the following Monday he died on Ayesha's lap, being something over sixty years of age.

A thousand and one details of Muhammad's private conduct, which the simple publicity of his life laid open to

contemporaries, and piety or curiosity or malice of posterity has maintained in common currency ever since, have been neglected here; but not because they are without any, or even considerable, historical significance. For his private conduct, on various accounts and chiefly because of the static tendency of Arabian society, has had as long-lasting effect as his public acts. Serious or trivial, his daily behaviour has instituted a canon which millions observe at this day with conscious mimicry. No one regarded by any section of the human race as Perfect Man has been imitated so minutely. The conduct of the Founder of Christianity has not so governed the ordinary life of His followers. Moreover, no Founder of a religion has been left on so solitary an eminence as the Muslim Apostle. There is no more striking fact in all the history of Islam, since the day of its Prophet's death, than the constant immunity of his memory from such attacks as have been made at one time or another on all its later saints.

Unanimous authority gives him sole credit for the establishment of Islam and the Islamic state. Two successors, who had been among the earliest of his Companions, were to give proof to the world of remarkable political genius. The Prophet had been wont to couple their names with his own whenever he desired to reinforce his authority—'I, Abu Bakr and Omar'—so ran the habitual formula; and it is recorded that the first of the two was, from the beginning, the prime agent for the propagation of the Faith. But not on these accounts or on any other is history justified in diminishing Muhammad's credit by assigning part of it to either Abu Bakr or Omar.

§ 4. *The Arabian Caliphate*

As for Abu Bakr it should be noted that, though his election to the Caliphate, in default of any surviving son of the Prophet or any successor designate, was decisive, it was not unopposed. Disorder threatened in Medina, and practically all Arabia outside assumed Islam dead with its Prophet. To contemporaries, at any rate, Muhammad alone was the state.

Before the news of the Prophet's death could have gone far, or the coming rebellion had raised its head, Abu Bakr ordered the levy for the Syrian border to carry out the original command of the Prophet. It seemed to his advisers at the time a rash act of piety in view of troubles likely to occur quickly nearer home; but, probably, of two evils the Caliph chose the least, when he refused to disappoint his militia of its raid. Little is recorded of its fortunes in the field except that it reached the Belka and raided Christian villages without encountering any regular army, Ghassanian or Imperial; and it seems to have been back in Medina before winter, and to have been used again almost immediately to help deal with the serious situation that had arisen in the meantime throughout the length and breadth of the Peninsula. Like the flying columns of volunteers hastily enrolled before its return, it had to teach Arabia that Muhammad's successor made the same political claim as Muhammad, and could support it with even stronger force; and that soldiers of the Caliph stood not less than soldiers of the Prophet for the system which licensed them throughout life to take from all Gentiles what they could, and assured them in heaven of delights even greater

than went with rapine on earth. Their message was driven home with remarkable rapidity. Tribes of Bahrain which had reverted to Christianity, tribes of Yemen which had reasserted private gods, were brought to recant again so easily and uniformly by such small forces, that one cannot but suppose some proportion of their own fighting men had been drafted into the Muslim columns, so that these might prevail rather by demonstration than by offence. Only in south Najd, an old seat of rival Monotheism, do we hear there was serious fighting. Maslama, the 'Little Prophet', had outlived the Great; and with his faithful Beni Hanifa, and the villagers of Yamama, he would not brook a successor to Muhammad. He made head against Ikrima and the first column sent against him, but not against Khalid, who brought up a full army. Discipline and cohesion won a hard-fought day, and in a riot of massacre and plunder the glory of Yamama, which poets of the 'Ignorance' had celebrated, perished from Arabia. Bahrain and Oman submitted with all the southern coast, and Yemen, though Persian influence was still active there, gave only a little more trouble. Within hardly more than a year the Peninsula was recalled to as much secular and religious allegiance as it had rendered to the Prophet.

The militia returning from victory brought up in an aggravated form the grave problem that had troubled the Prophet's last years. The early development of Muslim militarization is obscure, but stages can be marked by the progressive multiplication of the forces which are recorded as taking the field. In barely ten years the three or four hundred of Badr swelled to the thirty thousand,

who started for Tabuk. This number must have far exceeded the tale of men of fighting age which the Medinese population, even with the Meccan added, could have spared, and no doubt it included also a great many external warriors, drawn from fighting tribes of not only Hejaz but other parts of Arabia. The enrolment of several Bedawin leaders is, in fact, recorded before the Tabuk expedition: for example, two Tai champions came in from the north-west of the Peninsula, Zaid 'of the Horses' and a son of the famous Hatim. Such men would not appear unattended, nor, professed Christians as they had been, only for the salvation of their souls. Evidently the new Medinese state was coming to be recognized (like other Muslim states since its day) by all sorts of adventurers as an organization for fighting and rapine, which made apostasy worth while; and Bedawin raiders flocking to it infused its disciplined village Arabs with the predatory spirit of the Desert. Muhammad hastened to consecrate this spirit to Islam, and his latest armies were largely hordes of Bedawins, raiding as on a *ghazzu*, but in great numbers, with a common discipline, and inspired by a new conviction of gain by death. Obviously such an army, a terrible weapon against any contemporary society less concentrated, less coherent, and with less will-to-power, was a weapon that demanded to be constantly employed. Now that all the Peninsula had returned to the Faith there were no war-paths for it to tread, except such as led to the outer world. One ran north; one, north-east; and Abu Bakr hastened to direct it to both before the close of the year 633. The Caliph had, probably, no clear idea that his forces

would do more than raid what and where they could, upon the Syrian border of the Byzantine Empire, and the Euphratean border of the Persian Kingdom. That the first was less well defended now than on the day of Muta had been proved by the Muslim raid into the Belka in the previous year. That the last had become very weak was known by eastern Arabs twenty years before this; and the same tribe, which had had the best of the fight with Persian forces in 610, now sent to the Caliph an offer of co-operation.

Two expeditionary forces were dispatched to the fringes of the Syrian desert. That directed towards the eastern side was a flying column only—a mere handful of disciplined Muslimin under Muthanna, who was to gather up Bedawin irregulars on the march and try his luck in a field unfamiliar to the Medinese. It started first and was joined, in the Shamiya desert, by the Bakr al-Wail Bedawins who had invited it. On hearing that this tribe had been as good as its word the Caliph ordered Khalid ibn Walid to follow and take superior command, before any serious attack should be hazarded upon Hira.

The forces detailed for the western fringe, containing the bulk of the Muslim army, started in three divisions under leaders who would soon be better known—Yazid, the first of the Umayya family to command Muslimin in war; Shurahbil, who had helped Khalid to waste Yamama; and Amr el-As, of Egyptian fame. The last was to be the leader of all in prayer. This force found the frontier, as expected, open. The weak levies, which were all that the Patrician of Caesarea could send to the border, were overwhelmed, and the Muslimin began raiding towards Bostra on the

one hand, and Jerusalem on the other hand, of the Dead Sea.

Khalid, who had got into Hira without fighting, by arrangement with the Tai Christians of the district, was able to cross the Euphrates and raid almost to the Tigris at Tekrit, before the Persian levy could be marshalled in strength; but, before long, his weak force, largely Bedawin, had to fall back behind the Euphrates and adventure northward up its right bank. Opposite the Khabur mouth, he was arrested by a message from Medina bidding him hand over his command and go to the assistance of the western army, threatened by a concentration under Theodore, brother of the Byzantine Emperor. Khalid, suspecting, on account of his own notorious preference for Ali, some malice of the Caliph, and still more of Omar, seems to have believed this order to be a punishment for a recent swift and unauthorized pilgrimage to Mecca. But he made haste to obey; and having duly commissioned Muthanna, he rode through the heart of the desert by Sukhna and Tadmor towards Damascus. In the fringe of its oasis he defiantly raided a Ghassanian village, on Easter Day (or Pentecost) 634, before gathering up the Muslim division near Bostra and conducting it by the south of the Dead Sea to join the division of Amr el-As and some reinforcements newly arrived from Medina. Under his supreme command the combined force fell on Theodore near Jerusalem at the end of July, swept him before itself and followed up, plundering field and village, through Judaea and Samaria. The towns shut their gates but could give no help. Whether Abu Bakr ever received the news of this success, or realized, if he did, that his Muslimin

were well on their way to the great discovery about Rome, which two centuries earlier other 'Barbarians' had made on another flank of her empire, we do not know. His years, equalling those of his dead friend and master, were fulfilled in equal exhaustion of body and soul. Designating Omar to his throne, he died towards the end of August, in his modest hut, first and last of the Medinese Caliphs to pass in peace.

The Muslim state had entered on a process of rapid and uncontrollable change—change caused to so great an extent by physical and social conditions outside Arabia that the days of its direction from Medina were numbered. The soldiers who had gone forth from Abu Bakr did not return to Omar. In defiance of all Arabian precedent they had been out already a year and a half. The army of Syria had passed from raids to conquests, but to conquests not yet protected by any defensible frontier against the empire from which they had been wrested. Not only was Theodore still in Galilee, but the Emperor himself lay in the Orontes valley gathering a great army to deal with the invaders as he had dealt with the Persian. Early in 635 Khalid pushed Theodore out of Beisan, and chased him through the Bukaa to Homs; but there the imperial regulars, facing about, struck so hard at the head of the pursuing column that it had to fall back on Damascus, which had been surrendered, or betrayed, to Khalid by malcontent Christians. In this essentially Arab city the Muslimin made themselves as much at home for some months as in the Arabized provinces of Palestine and trans-Jordan; but it offered no vantage ground of battle. The Byzantine machine began slowly to move

from Antioch, and when in February 636 it had reached Homs, Khalid made haste to vacate his earthly paradise and await the enemy where his road to safety could not so easily be cut. Theodore followed with a ponderous and discordant host, half regulars, half irregulars. Part came down by Merj Ayun, part by way of Damascus, and the two divisions converged in the hottest month of the year upon one of the hottest places on the globe, the mouth of the Yarmuk in the Jordan valley. There the twentieth day of August broke in a dust-laden tempest; and down this wind the Muslim cavalry rode at the 'Greeks'. The imperial infantry stood firm; but Arabs, scouting round the mass, got in here and there, and in the blinding storm a panic began. Theodore fell and the Imperial army became a flying mob. The long period—more than a year—which Heraclius had taken to collect it suggests such difficulties encountered in levying discontented Syrians and Arabs of diverse creeds, as would readily account for his despair of raising a second army after the Yarmuk. He made no effort to prevent Syria from being overrun, but withdrew across the mountains; and failing a year later to retain Antioch after a momentary reoccupation, he left the Tauric barrier between Javan and Shem to divide them to this day.

So swift an Arab conquest of so great a province from the first potentate of the age has amazed posterity. Contemporaries, however, who had cause to know where the Byzantine power was well founded and where ill, can hardly have been so astonished. In the Semitic lands that power had never been assured. Taken over from Rome, it rested on the ever-diminishing prestige of strong

men dead; and unable to assimilate the native population, it remained foreign, contemned, an object of rebellion. Chronic unrest had been instilled into Syria by the Parthians, even in face of Rome, and increased tenfold by the Sasanians who, by repeated occupations, ruthlessly enforced an inherited right, proclaimed better than the Byzantine. Its recovery by Heraclius less than ten years before the Arab invasion was as unreal as recent. His Monothelite compromise had not closed the doctrinal rift which the racial incompatibility of Semites and Greeks had opened. When Syrians protested passionately that their crucified Lord had but one Nature, they did so because Greeks said He had two. If the latter chose to agree that His two natures were actuated by but one Will, mutual antipathy remained unaffected. The Syrians, who had punctuated the brief Byzantine Restoration with riots and risings, were overripe in ten years for redeliverance. The Arab was more congenial than the Persian, and they embarrassed the Byzantine defence rather than the Arab attack. Neither Syrians nor Arabs, however, had taken the measure of Byzantine power in its proper field by its defeat in Syria; and the Caliphs were soon to learn that Arabs could not spread Islam beyond the Taurus. This was only to be done by non-Semitic Muslimin. Umayyad lords of Syria continually, and Abbasid lords of Mesopotamia occasionally, did advance far into Greek lands, but merely to fulfil their need of raiding, and retire, like former Semitic kings, behind the natural barrier which the God of the Arabs has set to the dominion of his people.

With the conquest of Syria an Arab territorial Empire

was an accomplished fact. But its foreign extension so far outweighed economically the home state that the centre of political gravity threatened not much longer to remain in the Peninsula. Medina foresaw the coming danger; and in ignorance of civilized economy, thought that, by legislation, Arabs abroad might be kept Medinese. Accordingly Omar issued an edict forbidding Believers to acquire landed property in territories conquered from Unbelievers. The Muslim State claimed to dispose of all real estate whether in fee or by lease; the soldiers of Islam should remain simply soldiers wherever they might be; and if it were necessary to create Muslim settlements in extra-peninsular lands, these must be founded and maintained as state-camps. In Arab-speaking, settled, and conformable Syria such standing camps were regarded as superfluous; but in the unsettled Euphratean marches, face to face with Iran, two were called into existence as early as 635 to serve as bases for war with Persia. One, a little north of Hira (this town itself, being still largely Christian, was considered unsuitable for the militia of the Faithful), was to be the base against Irak; the other, in the south, on the bank of the Shatt, would serve campaigns in Arabistan. No sooner were they established, however, than Arabs and Aramaeans of the Mesopotamian fringe flocked into the first, and made it the city of Kufa; while men of Bahrain, Najd, and Yemen transformed the second into the populous mart of Basra.

On the Euphrates front, after Khalid's transference to Syria, the guerrilla, which had gone on merrily awhile, was checked by a serious disaster; and although Muthanna,

reinforced from Medina, restored Muslim hopes by repelling with great slaughter a Persian counter-attack on his head-quarters at Hira, and following the fugitives right across Irak, the Muslimin were thrown back on the defensive again in 636. Even Hira was evacuated to Rustem, general of Yezdigird, last of the Sasanids; and he pitched his camp hard by at the village of Khadisiya. The Muslimin, expecting reinforcements, contented themselves with worrying their opponents, in Bedawin fashion, till a column from Syria had joined. Then, in the spring of 637 (or in 636 ?), came a day, like that of the Yarmuk, dark with driven sand—Arab generals faced by men of fields and mountains no doubt waited for such weather—and Saad el-Wakkas, who now commanded the Muslimin, repeated Khalid's tactics. Rustem himself was reached and killed; the holy standards of Iran were seized; and the Sasanian army dissolved in panic more rapidly and completely than even the Byzantine had dissolved. Saad followed the rout across Euphrates and lower Irak, even to the Tigris, and the right-bank suburb of Yezdigird's fortified capital of Ctesiphon. Protected by the river, the city might have defied the Arabs; but its king, fearing assassination, thought fit to desert it for Holwan, and in the consequent confusion a Muslim detachment forded or swam the stream, beat down a half-hearted defence, and packed off to Medina the accumulated treasure of centuries. Two long years, however, had yet to pass before Yezdigird, despairing of Mesopotamia, would retire upon Iran.

It is not within our scope here to follow him to the fate of Darius, or the pursuing Arabs to the occupation

of an empire as far-flung as Alexander's, but hardly to be longer theirs than once it had been Greek. But one general observation may be permitted. No part of the Sasanian realm passed over to the Arabs with the same ease and completeness as Syria. Even in Mesopotamia, though it was inhabited largely by Arabized Aramaeans, and properly a Semitic area, a foreign leaven had been so long at work on all classes of its society that the local culture was an Irano-Semitic hybrid. Better rooted, and more naturally developed than the Graeco-Semitism of Syria, this culture resisted assimilation by the pure Semitism of its Muslim conquerors, which, indeed, suffered increasing contamination, as the Arabs spread over, and lost themselves upon, the great Iranian plateaux. It is notorious that, in the event, the Arab conquest of Persia proved so little a victory for pure Islam, that wave after wave of Iranian influences, which the Prophet would have anathematized, washed back to the very cradle of the Faith. Never has captor more swiftly and subtly been captured by his captive than Arabia by Persia.

Controlling the source of this stream of conquest, but not the tributaries greater than itself, which were swelling its volume and giving new directions to its current, the Caliph remained in Medina, leaving it once a year for the Meccan Pilgrimage and once only in all his years for any external province. Syria he did visit late in 638, but as a pilgrim rather than an Emperor of the East. Foreign forces beyond the control of any single man still seemed to spring from and be guided by him alone. But Omar himself can hardly have been deceived; for in guiding what he had failed to prevent, he acknowledged,

now and again, that he rode a breaking wave of anarchy. Such an occasion, pregnant of revolution, was the moment in December 639 when Amr el-As, at no express order but his own, moved southward from Caesarea to show that he could do as much as his rival, Khalid, who had been preferred before him five years ago. Hastening along the coast towards el-Arish, he was overtaken at Rafa by a message of recall from the Caliph, who had discussed his project some weeks earlier in Damascus, and neither consented to it nor refused. Stories differ; but it seems that Omar, uncertain how far on the road his headstrong lieutenant would have gone before receiving his warning, wrote alternatively: Should Egyptian territory not have been violated, Amr must turn back; if it had, let Amr go forward in the name of God, since return would mean the shame of Islam in the face of an enemy. In any case, Amr went on. Before he opened the Caliph's letter, he is said to have walked across the gully which traditionally divided Palestine from Egypt, being prepared to play for justification by success. As all the world knows, he attained, piecemeal and slowly in the long run of some half-dozen years, a public justification in Caliphial acceptance of his successive achievements, until, by a final victory, Islam gained a greater provinde than even Khalid had won. But if two Caliphs ratified his acts, neither approved the agent.

Though the direction of imperial expansion had passed beyond the control of a Medinese Caliph, Omar could order its social result. Fast as Muslimin were increasing, and far as they were dispersed, all, of whatever blood, still believed themselves to form a single community, owning

common allegiance, spiritual and political; and to Medina they looked for the general guidance of their government. It was Omar's tremendous task to adapt uncodified ordinances, made for primitive Arab societies, to the needs of a vast cosmopolitan aggregate, living under all sorts of conditions not contemplated by the original Lawgiver. To this task he applied himself as strenuously as any Darius. The first necessity was to stabilize the politico-religious basis, on which the structure of the Islamic state was founded, by committing the revealed ordinances of Allah to an unalterable form; the second, to provide that the resultant canon should be capable of application to conditions not considered at the time of revelation. These aims demanded at the outset an exhaustive examination of the notes and memories of the Prophet's associates, among whom none had shared his confidence more than Omar himself; next, their collation, selection, and reduction to written form; finally, consideration of the result, in relation to the social and political exigencies of the moment. The compilation of the divine utterances proved difficult enough. The Prophet, who never wrote easily a script not commonly used at Mecca in his youth, seems to have left virtually nothing under his own hand; but he had dictated some revelations to private secretaries; others had been preserved in the notes or the unwritten recollection of his Companions; others again in the memories of less constant hearers, now widely dispersed. The Commissioners appointed to collect the body of revelation arrived, no doubt, at as exhaustive and authoritative a record of a dead man's oral deliveries as has ever been

obtained; but one can hardly doubt that, in the process of editing, it underwent critical, and even tendentious, treatment by the Caliph and those about him, who were concerned with immediate problems of a new world. It is questionable whether any edition was issued in Omar's lifetime. What is regarded as the archetypal Koran is kept to this day in the Prophet's mosque at Medina; but it has always been known as the book of Omar's successor.

The authority of God's precepts was supplemented by that of His Apostle's daily practice, the evidence for which admitted of even more discriminating selection. This was not codified immediately, and Omar and his advisers had not to reckon with an unalterable Book when applying it to political use. Their freedom seems to have been used with equal sagacity and sense of responsibility. Omar's primary principle was simplification, and his object two-fold. On the one hand, he would confirm to all Believers of whatever race a common social status, markedly superior to that of all Unbelievers; on the other, he desired to secure life, rights of user, motives for continued productivity, and in general tolerable conditions to communities of non-Muslimin which must be retained within the Empire of Islam in its economic interest. He was sufficiently man of his time and race to assume without question that these could claim no right to live; and if their extermination or expulsion would help the state more than harm it, out with them! In the Peninsula, where the presence of Unbelievers would always be an offence and might cause social strife, he did away with the Jews of Khaibar and the Christians of Najran, regardless that the

Prophet had assured both of their lands. But it was less imperative and much less expedient to purge the external provinces of all Faiths but one.

Omar was a fanatic, of course: else he could not have become an Arab Caliph within twenty years of the Hijra. But the few and simple social rules that he devised for the vast complex of Islamic territories were much less oppressive than might well have followed such conquests by such a people; and they compare favourably with the theory and practice of most lords of the East. While Arab Muslimin might not own or cultivate land outside Arabia, Unbelievers were to be suffered to do both on payment of a twofold tax. Omar ordered the tempering of these taxes in practice according to local circumstances. If, for example, an unbelieving community, like the Syrian Christians, had been helpful in the moment of Muslim conquest, its members might be mulcted in capitation fee, but not in land-tax—a particular exemption which resulted in Irak having to supply most of the needs of the Medinese treasury. But if Omar restricted the licence of Muslimin to plunder Infidels, he imposed on the latter interdicts and regulations of conduct which would serve everywhere to distinguish them as socially inferior. They were to wear neither arms nor dress like a Muslim's; they might not ride in a Believer's presence (Omar framed these disabilities in Damascus, where they would be enforced almost to the present day), and if they retained buildings for worship, they might sound no call to them, and must pray under their breath. Before all Muslimin, men or women, an Infidel must abase himself and not

look to be believed against their word. Such and other penal clauses put Unbelievers virtually at the mercy of the Faithful, both in private custom and before public law—that is, the law of Medina. Into the machinery of local administration Omar introduced no general change. To unify this would have entailed in the provinces an interval of anarchy, after which reconstruction would have been beyond the capacity of Arab townsmen and tribesmen. Therefore the frame and forms of Byzantine and Persian provincial government were continued in Allah's name, and effigies of Christian and Iranian Emperors remained current, like portraits of Maria Theresa and the stamp of St. George and the Dragon in Arabia of our own time. No distinctively Muslim money was struck immediately, nor was the language of the Prophet prescribed between non-Arabs and their official chiefs.

Hardly more than ten years of warfare, famine, and pestilence were allowed to Omar for laying down the broad social lines upon which the Islamic world was to be conducted. Late in the year 644 he was stabbed in the Prophet's mosque by a Christian slave of Iranian origin. There was some suspicion of a Persian plot ; but, probably, it was a chance success of individual discontent or fanaticism. The divinity, which had hedged the first two Kings of Islam, availed the third and subsequent vicegerents of Allah no better than Christian Kings by Divine Right.

The dying Caliph enjoined upon a committee of six principal Companions the choice of one to succeed him. Negotiations ended after three days in the unfortunate

preferment of a son-in-law of the Prophet, Uthman, son of Affan, to whom, as a nugatory candidate, each of the other five, desiring but despairing of his own election, gave his second vote. Another son-in-law, Ali, is said to have lost his chance by an ominous declaration that he would respect no other law than the very word of God; for this was understood to imply his dissent from Omar's established constitution of the Islamic Empire. One can see, in any case, that he was adumbrating the principle which was to divide, in his name, the Islamic world. What had been instituted under divine inspiration might only be governed legitimately by one to whom inspiration had been transmitted. Ali had asserted, ever since the Prophet's death, that he, and he only, had been named successor by the inspired lips; and it may have been so, for Ayesha, whose testimony put his claim aside, was notoriously his bitter foe. To have been named by the Apostle was to be named by God, and God's nominee alone would be inspired. Ali may or may not have pretended also to knowledge of esoteric secrets communicated by the Prophet in life. Such knowledge, certainly, was claimed for him and his descendants; but not perhaps until Persian influences had made more headway was this claim made a basis of belief. Nor was another doctrine which would largely determine the subsequent history of the Alid schism—that the divine virtue passed and only could pass in the Prophet's seed. In this last lurked an idea destructive of the Prophet's system and teaching—the idea of Incarnation. It was to lead, not to deification, except among a few cryptic groups of Muslimin, withdrawn in the hills and wastes of Syria and Persia, but to a mystic

distinction of Ali's heirs from ordinary mankind, as being something of God made flesh. A vast number of those who accepted Islam outside Arabia, and many also within the Peninsula, had been born and bred to incarnationist beliefs. The majority craved simply for a visible manifestation of God in such flesh as their own; a minority, chiefly Iranian, satisfied a similar desire by a doctrine that God is immanent in all flesh, which therefore must one day become God. If this was an inversion of the majority's belief, it was not less, in its essence, Incarnationism. The disintegrating idea soaked even into Arabia from both Byzantine Christianity and Iranism, but most potently from the last, because most spiritually. The third Caliph was to see the complete conquest and in part the colonization of Iran by Arabs. The culture which they encountered there exerted ever-increasing influence upon them, and bred one storm after another in the Islamic state. Iran has split it to this day by Shiism; Iran founded in violence and maintained by bloodshed the Abbasid Caliphate; Iran begot the Carmathian heresy, to desecrate the Kaaba; and Iran inspired and guided the schism of the Fatimites.

Uthman, conscious of a dangerous disaffection among leading Hashimites in Medina, turned to Mecca. Himself an Umayyad, who in early life had passed for a man of fashion in the Meccan aristocracy, he addressed himself now to his kin, and put its members into the more important governorates throughout the Empire. Irak became, as the Umayyad nobles said, their family garden; and Syria was only less so, because the strongest of Abu Sufian's sons, Muawiya, nourished projects which prompted him

to withdraw his whole province from any control but his own. As for Egypt, Amr, suspected not less by Uthman than by Omar of playing for his own hand, was superseded early in the new reign. Though he had to be restored in the summer of 646 in order to recover Alexandria, he was soon summoned again to depart; and betaking himself to Muawiya, he remained in Syria so long as Uthman lived.

Meccan nobles of this generation were not ascetics, and the Umayyan governors had no more scruples about living well by their opportunities than most men of authority in the East; but the stories of their exactions under Uthman, their lusts and their luxury, have come down to us from Abbasid sources, and must be discounted. Certainly their conduct would not have caused a crisis in the Empire, without assiduous propaganda by malcontents nearer the Caliphial throne. Among these two parties had been formed, both desiring revolution but agreeing ill in all else. One, anti-Umayyad, inspired by the Prophet's widow, Ayesha, was led by the old Companions, Zubair and Talha. The other was the party of Ali and Apostolic Succession. Encouraged by both, provincials forwarded complaints and menaces from east and west, to which Uthman replied and doggedly held on. In 656, these were followed up by men in arms from Egypt and Irak—Muawiya seems to have held the Syrians back—ostensibly bound for Mecca. Refused admittance to Medina, they sent in demands for the destitution of their provincial governors. The Caliph temporized and they withdrew a short distance; but presently they returned and forcing a way into the town blockaded Uthman's

house in hope of his bloodless surrender. When some weeks passed without result, their fear lest certain forces, known to be on the way from the Umayyad governors of Damascus and Basra, might frustrate their purpose, impelled them at last to assault the house, which could be entered from adjoining roofs. The aged Caliph was found reading the Koran, and his assailants hesitated, till one advanced and struck.

Ali was in Medina, having done nothing to save his Lord. His candidature had been mooted, if not actually posed, at all previous avoidances of the throne, and many had taken ill the neglect of it. Now for eight days it still remained in doubt, while Talha and Zubair, supported by Medinese, used every argument to induce the men of Irak to oppose the Egyptians. In the event allied swords from Basra, Kufa, and Fustat silenced the local clamour. Zubair and Talha swore fealty to the Prophet's spiritual heir; but some other notables contrived to escape unsworn, and a few of these posted to Syria to hear Muawiya pledge himself to repudiate a fourth Caliph till, at least, the murder of the third should have been avenged.

Muawiya's attitude entailed on Ali the hostility of a quarter of the external Empire. In Irak, however, and to a less degree in Egypt, he made good quickly by grace of the swords which had slain his predecessor; and in both countries he was able to destitute most of Uthman's governors and install his own men. At home the mass of the population was not well affected, and opposition from the party of Talha and Zubair grew stronger as his foreign supporters departed. Its two leaders went down to Mecca to see Ayesha, and finding her of one mind with

themselves, forswore a fealty rendered at the sword's point, and rode off with her and her partisans for the camp at Basra. There, and at Kufa, partisans gathered to them on the first shock of surprise and began to massacre Ali's men; but the appearance of the Caliph's son, Hasan, the news that his father was following, and the general sympathy of Irak with Legitimists checked the progress of revolt. Towards the end of the year Ali approached; and his rearguard, said to have been composed of men made desperate by the guilt of Uthman's murder, attacked, without orders, outside Basra a force under Talha and Zubair which Ayesha was accompanying in a litter. The two leaders were killed at the outset; an appeal to the rebel rank and file to abide by the arbitration of the Koran passed unheeded, and the combat became general. The first battle in which Muslim stood up to Muslim in ordered array was decided in Ali's favour round the camel which bore the 'Mother of the Faithful'. A second was soon to come. Ali, reinforced from Irak and Iran, moved up the Euphrates early in 657, and Muawiya saw that he had to forestall an invasion of North Syria. The rivals met at Siffin on the right bank, over against Rakka, and skirmishes and attempts to negotiate an arrangement occupied two months. Battle was joined formally at the end of July, but broken off on the second day when Muawiya's vanguard, with copies of the Koran bound to their lances, protested readiness to abide by the Word of God. Ali hesitated, since such had been his own proposition a few months before, listened to interested advice and took a step fatal to Divine Right. He agreed to submit his claim to human arbitration,

implicitly recognizing the elective principle of succession. A representative of Syria and a representative of the rest of the Empire should meet on the Syrian frontier and decide if he were true Caliph or no. Muawiya named no less a champion than Amr el-As, the conqueror of Egypt: Ali chose an old Companion, Abu Musa el-Ashari. The place of meeting was, as some say, Duma; others maintain it was Udruh near Maan. But it matters little. What the arbitrators may have agreed, matters even less. If they did agree at all, it was probably to declare the Caliphate vacant and refer back to the leading Companions the choice of Ali or another. The one important outcome of the matter was that Muawiya felt free to act. Two years later he was proclaimed Caliph at the holiest spot in his province, the city of Jerusalem.

The Legitimists had not waited for the issue of an arbitration which was not consistent with their creed. A large body of them separated from the army after the day of Siffin, preferring to nurse their idea of a Vicegerent of God away from the real presence of Ali. The Caliph followed up the secessionists—Khawarij as they called themselves—who were more Royalist than their King, and smashed at Nahrawan, in July 658, those champions of his own Right Divine. But Kharijism was based on an instinct too profound to be extinguished; and three Kharijites, after Ali had struggled for two more years against the loss of Egypt to Amr and incessant attacks on Irak by Muawiya's troops, assassinated him at the door of a mosque in Kufa. In his death he was canonized martyr and saint, recovering in a day all he had lost. Indeed, by some he was lifted higher still. His defects of stupidity,

indolence and feebleness of purpose were blurred in a halo, and his personal courage and prowess glowed by mystic light. When his sons, Hasan and Husain, followed him within twenty years to the grave, one, if not both, by violence, and neither having enjoyed his right, the apotheosis of the family was inevitable. Thronging pilgrims to Mashad Ali at Najf, and to Mashad Husain at Karbala, and the passions which still are stirred by the Play on the Tenth Muharram throughout the Moslem world —these phenomena continue to prove that death avails a Messiah more than all the days of his life.

§ 5. *Legitimist Opposition*

FROM this moment onwards—from A. D. 660, the year in which Muawiya was acknowledged Caliph in Syria—Arabian history shrinks back into the Peninsula and is concerned less with the effect of Arabia on the outer world than with the effect of the outer world on Arabia. The Peninsula had spent itself, sending not only its spirit into other lands, but its blood into alien peoples. Henceforward its part in Islamic history was to be, in both politics and religion, subaltern. Not that Arabia proper made no effort to reassert her primacy. Mecca set up a Caliph, in the person of Zubair's son, against the secular usurper of Syria, and held out for a generation, even procuring at one moment Irak's recognition of its choice; and neither Muawiya nor any son of his won acknowledgement from the sacred city. But an end was put at last to the Meccan effort in 692 after a six months' siege. Medina, drastically chastized already by a general

of Yazid, was humiliated again by Hajjaj, the general of Abd el-Malik. The Meccans had to suffer the demolition of Ibn Zubair's enlargement of their Great Mosque, and the expulsion of all Kharijites, Alidites and other Legitimists who harboured within their walls. In the seventy-first year of the Faith, Islam was proclaimed once more united; but it was not a union of hearts in almost any part of the Peninsula, and the interest of Arabian history for the next two centuries will consist in the gradual growth of Legitimism.

The incompatibility of the Peninsula with the recognized Caliphial order of things, whether directed from Syria or from Irak, was to increase and issue in its virtual detachment from the Islamic Empire. The process is of actual interest, because the religious and political temper betrayed by it governs many communities at the present day in the Peninsula. More Arabs than are often reckoned with still profess anti-Sunnite creeds, for example, most Yemenite Highlanders, whether Zaidis, Ismailis or Daudiya, and the inhabitants of the hinterland districts from Najran to Jauf; so do also the mass of the tribesmen in Oman, with part of those of Hasa, and certain clans of several Bedawin tribes, including (a very interesting survival) the Beni Ali, whose lands lie the nearest to Medina of any that pertain to the Harb. The rest of the inhabitants of the east and centre, while nominally within the four corners of the Sunna, are followers of the rarest ritual school, the Hanbalite, and hardly less anti-Sunnite than the Shiites. They have given in Wahabism general expression to their dissent, and drawn to their creed, from time to time, the Asiri tribes-

men. Of the remainder, thus reduced to the inhabitants of the western and south-western coastlands—Hejaz, the Yemen Tihama, the Aden district and Hadramaut—few communities, except under military pressure or (if affected by the Pilgrimage) for the sake of gain, have ever acquiesced in any external control of Islam, or rendered better than lip service to the Turkish Caliphate. They have justified their intransigence by Legitimism, by Literalism (Wahabites and Daudiya) or by Electivism (Omanites); but behind such religious ideas, as behind the original Kharijism in which they are rooted, lies the Arab's deep resentment at his own incapacity to retain control of the Faith and Empire, which he made.

The Legitimist spirit begotten by Ali's party at Medina waxed with the dispersion of the Kharijites, and took a nationalist colour from their uncompromising opposition to the Umayyads of Syria. We find these sectaries so involved in the Meccan resistance to Muawiya and his immediate successors, that, after the Umayyad success, they were excluded altogether from the temple of Islam. The opposition reached full growth under insidious influences propagated from Baghdad, when the Abbasid Caliphate had settled down to military government of a Persian type, and the Alid Arabs, who had helped to establish it, realized that they had been deceived. For this Caliphate was, in reality, a revival of Persian, rather than a continuation of Arab, kingship. The movement which substituted Abbasids for Umayyads came out of the east, and the first of the dynasty, Abu'l Abbas, had to fence himself with swords of Khorassan against the Legitimism of Irak. The

second Abbasid, Mansur, was not less dependent on Persians ; with their alien aid he coerced Medina, in 762, to acknowledge his succession, and inflict shame and exile on the local survivors of the house of Ali. Though he and his successor persistently courted Arab loyalty by making magnificent provision for Pilgrims, by undertaking Pilgrimages in person and in state, and by enlarging and beautifying the Holiest Places, they could not kill the seed of Alid blood, and their successor reaped its harvest within sight of Mecca itself. Harun returned to the policy of annual state Pilgrimages and conciliatory display; but Mamun, his second successor, saw nearly all the Peninsula rise in the name of Ali. He won back Yemen and the Holy Cities, but was sufficiently impressed with the depth of Legitimist feeling, not only in Arabia but in Irak, to proclaim an Alid his heir in 817, and striking the black flag of his house to hoist the green for a sign that the Abbasid dynasty was merged in the Legitimate line. His policy, had it been maintained, might have saved the south of the Empire to the Caliphate ; but it would have lost the east. The Persians, who had made the Abbasids in the image of their national Kings of yore, were not going to entrust their racial privileges to an Arab viceregent of a Meccan God ; and Mamun found he had to deal with an Anti-Caliph in Baghdad, and rehoist the black ensign before his own throne could be safe. He continued, nevertheless, to lean towards Legitimism, and so, likewise, did his two successors. The Faithful were bidden to rate Ali in the scale of creation below Muhammad alone, and hold, with the Mutazilite Schoolmen, that the Word was created like him who revealed it—seemingly an academic

tenet, but one which endangered the permanence of Islam itself.

Such Arabizing measures of individual Abbasids, however, were not destined to avail a Caliphate which was even then passing out not only of Arab hands, but also of Persian, into those of northern aliens, less compatible than Iranians with the Semites of the south. By the middle of the ninth century, when Mutawakkil was on the throne, Turki praetorians were the Caliph's masters; and their leader, Bogha, gave Medina to understand that it had passed under a rule as foreign as his name. Terrorized by these aliens, Arabia fell to plotting with malcontents at Kufa, the last outpost of Legitimism towards Baghdad, its enemy; but not till about the end of the century, when the prestige of the Caliphate had been depreciated by the unreality of its power, did the seed of general rebellion, scattered from Bahrain to Yemen by one itinerant emissary after another, ripen to harvest.

About 880 one of these missionaries of Legitimism, Hamdan Karmat by name, a Yemenite mystic who had studied in Kufa, was perambulating the east and south of the Peninsula. He was not the principal in the movement, to which his name has since been attached. Its real spring and centre was in that Ubaidullah, who, claiming to be great-grandson of Ismail, fifth in descent from Ali, was to fly some fifteen years later from Irak to Morocco, and reappear (or as some say, another impersonated him), in 909, as Mahdi and found the dynasty of the Fatimites. From the secret Shiite organization in Kufa, of which he became the moving spirit, issued three important sectarian movements, the schism of the Ismailis

having to be added to those of the Fatimites and the Carmathians. Common origin, however, did not avail long to govern their growth.

The last in our enumeration, but the earliest in manifestation, Carmathianism had permeated eastern Arabia by the last decade of the century. Its eponymous preacher was restricted to a spiritual rôle, like other East Arabian 'prophets', Maslama before and Muhammad Abdul Wahab long afterwards; and one Abu Said el-Jannabi took political control. About the year 900 he felt strong enough to abjure all allegiance to the Caliph Mutadid, whose punitive army he defeated; and presently he occupied Katif and moved the provincial capital of Bahrain to the oasis of Hasa, fortifying a new town. Thence by propaganda and arms, during the next dozen years, he spread his political influence over almost all south-western Arabia; but although he fell with great slaughter on Pilgrim caravans, he did not get into Mecca or Medina, before his death by violence in 913. His second son, Abu Tahir, was able to do more. Not only did he throw the Caliphial troops back behind the Euphrates, taking both Basra and Kufa, and menacing even Baghdad; but, in 928, he swept into Mecca to dethrone Sunnism. The Black Stone was prized out of the angle of the Kaaba and taken to consecrate Shiism in Hasa, where it would remain for more than twenty years. Virtually the whole Peninsula turned Carmathian and the suzerainty of Baghdad became as vain there as once had been the suzerainty of Ctesiphon. The Caliph of Islam could not send a single pilgrim to its Holy Cities except at ransom.

For some years yet Carmathianism was to remain what it

had begun by being—a wing of the comprehensive Kufan movement. Abu Tahir had acknowledged the Fatimite in North-West Africa for Caliph; and when the latter's second successor advanced to the confines of Egypt in the middle of the tenth century, the Carmathians obeyed his command to replace the Black Stone in the Kaaba, which the Fatimite expected soon to be his. But as Fatimite power approached establishment as the arbiter of Islam, its connexion with wild Bedawi zealots, who outraged the sentiments of civilized Muslimin (as their local descendants, the Wahabites, would do again in the eighteenth century), became inconvenient. Rupture was sought and achieved. The Carmathians turned themselves to the Abbasid, with an offer to recover for him Syria and Egypt, where the Fatimite, Moizz, had enthroned himself in 972; but flouted at Baghdad for heretics no better than the Fatimites, they ended by going out to take Syria and Egypt on their own account. Temporarily successful in the former land, where they found Turks to help them, they had to fall back exhausted from the latter. They maintained themselves with difficulty in Hasa for another century, losing their grip on one province after another and seeing Fatimite suzerainty supplant theirs in the Holy Cities and all the West of the Peninsula. Euphratean tribes, egged on by the rulers of Baghdad, attacked them continually, and in 988 the Muntafik succeeded in forcing one of their strongest elements, the Beni Sulaim, to seek new pastures in Egypt and farther coastlands of Africa. As a polity, and even as a distinct sect, Carmathianism disappeared with the eleventh century.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY

§ 6. *The Sherifates*

When orthodox Caliphs in Baghdad were puppets of praetorians (many Muslimin insist that no Abbasids were true Caliphs after the middle of the tenth century), and heretical Caliphs in Cairo were voluptuaries or madmen, there was none to control the Arabs, and the Peninsula relapsed into the political chaos of tribal and urban autonomies from which it had been rescued by the Prophet. While, however, the greater Bedawin chiefs revived the political disunion of the 'Ignorance', Shiite Islam maintained religious uniformity. Alid generations had multiplied exceedingly and *ashraf* (sherifs) were become legion in Arabia. Most enjoyed more religious than political consideration; but here and there sherifial government had been instituted. Two such governments, which came obscurely to birth at this epoch, have lasted to the present day. These are the Hasanid Emirate of Mecca and the Hasanid Imamate in Yemen. Medina also came under the rule of Sherifs, but of another branch of Ali's stock, the Husainid.

The Meccan Emirate, known by Europeans as the Grand Sherifate, emerged from the Carmathian upheaval. A Hasanid family of Najd, the Beni Ukhaidir, availing itself of the general heretical supremacy, enforced its private tyranny upon the Holy City; but we know practically nothing about it except that it was brief. The Egyptian power, Fatimite in spirit if not yet name, and disposed, as has been stated above, to dethrone Carmathianism in Hejaz, sent, in 966, sufficient force with the Pilgrim caravan to enable its conductor to substitute himself for

the local Emir. He was himself a Hasanid, by name Abu Muhammad Jafar, and with his dynasty, the 'Musawi', the annals of the Grand Sherifate begin. It did not yet, nor would it for long time to come, dominate all Hejaz. Medina, mindful of her primacy under the first Caliphs, remained in opposition, and each rival had its port, Yambo being Husainid, while Jidda was Hasanid. Strife broke out continually, the bone of contention being ever the Pilgrimage, which each community regarded as its peculiar opportunity of plunder. Geographical position made Medina the more subservient to Egypt; Mecca from the first showed a tendency to break away and rely, whenever possible, on some other protector. Jafar's son and second successor, Abul Futuh, even proclaimed himself Caliph at a moment of Fatimite weakness, going out against the Medinese and all Bedawins who called his right in question; and the cognate house of Fatiki sherifs, who struggled continually with Abul Futuh and his son, Muhammad Shukr, and obtained the throne for a short spell after the latter's death, inaugurated a pro-Yemen policy, which would often be taken up again by subsequent Emirs. Never able to feed itself, still less to feed its pilgrims, Mecca was, is, and will be, constrained to depend on more fortunate lands; but dependence on Egypt, which can most easily supply Hejaz, has always been irksome to its Arabs, and we find almost any alternative preferred—even Irak or the Turk. Thus, in 1070, the nominal supremacy of the Abbasid Caliph and real power of the Seljukian Turk were acknowledged by the first Emir of the Hashimite House which followed the Fatikis. Yemen was always the first choice of the Hejazis,

and a policy of friendship towards its princes continued to inspire all Meccan dynasties until, and even after, their subjection to the Ottoman power.

No protector or suzerain, however, seems to have been able to make the Meccan lords respect the rights of pilgrims, whose sufferings during two centuries gave offence to the whole Muslim world. When the Fatikis went one better than their predecessors by snatching the gifts of the Faithful from the Kaaba itself, a Suleihi Sultan of Yemen marched to avenge Allah; but no one came to the rescue of His children, tortured in Mecca and Jidda till they would render to the Emir whatever the landlopers of the open roads might have spared. The Meccan Principate had, in fact, hardly any other resource than such plunder for the support of its dignity and its army of slaves. Not the twentieth part of Hejaz is arable, and little, and that in kind only, can be exacted from the nomads of its pasture lands and wastes. In the long run, of course, a policy of plundering pilgrims was bound to defeat itself. All but the most fanatical or most courageous were deterred from making the Pilgrimage at all. Turcomans, Afghans or Moghrebins might endure to the Kaaba; but Irakis, Syrians, and Egyptians, the easier and better prey, renounced performance of a primary duty of their Faith. Moreover, these Emirs of the first two centuries aggravated their evil fame in richer quarters of the Muslim world by being frankly Shiite, with a leaning towards Zaidism, the prevailing creed of Yemen. For long to come the Meccan aristocracy would be accused of keeping this heresy in its heart.

At last, as the twelfth century wore on, a new force

made itself felt in Hejaz, to the discouragement equally of professed heresy and such flagrant treatment of the Faithful as was imputed to the Hashimites. This was the rigidly orthodox power lately established in Syria by Turkish Atabegs. When Nureddin took up its reins, Arabia felt once more such pressure from the north as she had not experienced since the decline of the Umayyad Caliphate. The Syrian Sultan developed an inconvenient solicitude about the Holy Cities. Medina, the bane of Mecca, was refortified, and schism, which Nureddin himself had seen dividing Islam in the face of Frankish enemies of the Faith, was sternly discountenanced. He seems to have used peaceful methods only; but his Kurdish successor, Saladin, showed he was prepared to use force. The passage of the latter's brother with troops for Yemen, in 1174, was followed by the introduction of a new family name into the Friday *Khutba* and an order to the Emir to keep his hands off pilgrims in Mecca and Jidda. If this order was compensated by an allowance of money and an annual grant of Egyptian corn, it was not to be evaded; for Saladin's viceroy in Yemen was commissioned to oversee the Holy Places *ex officio*. The days of Hashimite robbery were over. The power of the House, attacked by the Husainid Sherifs of Medina, and defied on the Pilgrim roads by sherifs of the dispossessed Fatiki family, hardly survived the century. About 1200, by some sequence of events unknown to us, which entailed fighting, a new House of Hasanid Emirs was inaugurated by a chief of the Juhaina Arabs, sixteenth in descent from Ali, and tenth from that Musa who had given his name to the dynasty of Jafar.

This Emir, Katada, whose lineal descendants are still reigning in Hejaz, looms, in the mediaeval mist, a great Arab, maker of a state, law-giver, and moderator. He was, of course, no man of peace. During most of the twenty years of his reign he was fighting, and at one time or another at odds with both his would-be suzerains, the Abbasid of Baghdad in 1212, and the Ayyubid Sultan of Cairo in 1215. The provocations were of his own offering. His declared policy, which he would bequeath to his sons, was, on the one hand, to eschew friendly relations with both Egypt and Irak, and before all things evade invitations, however flattering, from their rulers; on the other hand, to keep on good terms with whosoever ruled in Yemen. Thus only might Hejaz hope for practical independence. He had Ayyubid princes on all sides of him, in Syria and Yemen, besides Egypt; and, provided they would respect his independence and pay for privilege, he was willing that each and all be prayed for in the *Khutba*. To conciliate a wider world and make revenue for his Emirate, he restored and policed the Pilgrim roads; and Mecca became once more the common meeting-ground of Islam. Katada was the first 'Grand Sherif' who could claim Hejaz for his own between Khaibar in the north and Hali Point in the south. Taif and its contumacious Beni Thakif were brought under, and the Husainids of Medina chastised early in his reign. His last recorded act was to read these last yet another lesson with his army of mercenary blacks and soldiers of fortune.

Katada's sons and grandsons to the eighth generation observed his dying counsels. From his son, Hasan, to

the better-known Emir of the same name, who succeeded in 1396, the Sherifs of his House maintained an understanding with Yemen, and tried to evade the pressing attentions of Egypt and Syria. With Irak, since the Tartar invasion of 1221, they had not to reckon. But it was not always possible to keep the northern powers at a distance, while Medina was ever ready to admit them to Hejaz, or help a disappointed Hasanid who had missed the throne. Everlasting dissensions of sherifial families offered repeated opportunities for intervention; and some Mamelukes pressed hard. When Sultan Beibars set forth on his return from the Pilgrimage of 1269, he left an Egyptian detachment to convert a momentary into a permanent domination. But the Emirs managed to get rid of it once more and return to their old ways. The first half of the fourteenth century was filled with their internecine strife; not only Yemen and Egypt, but the Tartars of Khodabendi and his son, Abu Said, in Irak were called in at one time or another by rival Houses, reckless of the invariable result—that Turkish mercenaries were imposed on Mecca every few years. The Emirs lived for the most part outside the city, in Wadi Marr, with their negro guards, receiving all and sundry Bedawins, taking toll of gifts to the Holy Place and the goods of any who died on pilgrimage, and still, with all their Order, testifying more sympathy for Zaidism than for the Shafeite orthodoxy of the common people. The later Emirs of this period, Hasan II and Barakat I, who together covered the first half of the fifteenth century, were strong rulers, who controlled an army much improved in discipline and spirit by the introduction of Asiri and Yemenite elements;

and by effectively holding Medina, they assured their revenues without wanton oppression of Pilgrims.

In the long run, however, Katada's dynasty, by keeping Mecca open to the Muslim world, worked a change in the spirit of the city. It learned the wealth and power of the northern Muslimin, and becoming dependent for luxuries on their annual resort, valued independence less and even accused the Emirate of hindering the development of its metropolitan wealth. With Hasan and Barakat we hear for the first time of organized opposition to the Emirate offered by a merchant class, which included non-sherifian notables, such as the great Sheibi family, of pre-Islamic nobility, which kept the padlock of the Kaaba. The Circassian Sultans of Egypt were quick to see their opportunity. In Hasan's reign they stretched a hand towards the sinews of sherifial power by sending an official to Jidda to watch the administration of its customs; and, when Barakat, after an exhausting struggle with his brothers, prevailed at last with Turkish help, he was bidden lodge a Turkish captain and his detachment of horse within the city, and suffer the Jidda dues to be controlled entirely by the Egyptian officer. In reality, if not in name, there had come to be an alien Overseer of the Holy Places; and Barakat confessed humiliation by asking the Mameluke resident at Jidda to consult his Sultan about the choice of a successor to the Emirate. Katada's descendants were no longer in a position to observe his exclusive policy. They must rely on Egypt to keep their thrones against foes in their households and their own Hejaz. Barakat and, after him, another Emir of this name, had to beg

Egypt to treat on their behalf with robber clans of the Harb, such as the Beni Lam, and the Zubaid, who were leagued with Husainid Sherifs of Yambo and the Meccan Opposition. The Mameluke, Kait Bey, came to Mecca, in 1480, as master as well as pilgrim, and Barakat II, who had been educated in Egypt, became his prisoner. He escaped from custody on the road to Egypt and bought himself back into the Emirate, and too wary to accept, in person, any invitation to Cairo, sent a son, Muhammad Abu Numai, to make his peace.

Four years later this son would go on a second mission to the same place. This time he carried the padlock of the Kaaba to the hands of Selim the Grim. The Circassian Mamelukes had followed their viceroys of Cilicia and Syria, and their Kingdom had passed to the conquering Osmanli. Mecca, which had suffered for generations one breed of Turks, exchanged it for another. A new Overseer of the Holy Places was installed in the room of the old. That was all, for the moment, that the Ottoman Conquest signified to the Sherifate.

Yemen, which had broken away from Carmathian tyranny about the middle of the tenth century, passed for a while, both Lowland and Highland, under the Shiite influence of the Fatimites. The Lowland (Tihama), however, where neither Christian nor Persian influence had been strong and an ancient feud with the Highlanders ever smouldered, was only waiting to declare for the Sunna. It seceded definitely from the Shiite camp as soon as a local chieftain of Saada, one Husain el-Kasim, of the Sherifian Rassites, descended from Zaid, son of Hasan,

son of the Caliph, Ali, proclaimed a Zaidite Imamate. Thereupon Yemen relapsed into what has always been its normal political state, unless some strong alien hand be pressing upon it as a whole—a state of intermittent warfare between Shafeite tribes in the Lowlands and Zaidite tribes in the Highlands, the former rallying round Zabid, the latter divided between Saada and Sanaa. It is a war of rural tribes which coalesce against common danger, and fall apart again when the danger is past, but not of towns, which matter less in Yemen than anywhere else in Arabia.

In the twelfth century the Sunna received in Yemen the same support from the Ayyubids as in Hejaz. Saladin attached to the control of that country so much importance (recent Ottoman Sultans have agreed with him), that he sent his own brother in 1173 to reduce it to his obedience. It broke away again; but again his troops overran it all, and Ayyubids would continue to rule it from Zabid for more than half a century. The submission of the Highlands, however, was never cordial, and, in 1197, the Saada Rassites, led by Mansur, an energetic Imam of the Kasim House, succeeded in re-establishing their power. This Zaidite dynasty maintained itself in Sanaa, though unable to master Zabid, even when Ayyubite protection no longer availed it; the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries were filled with its warfare against the Rasulid Sultans. The Zaidite Imamate, nominally elective, now became practically hereditary, in one branch, or in another, of the House of Kasim, which has reigned to the present day.

The Rasulid dynasty held sway in the ancient university town of Zabid throughout the two centuries

which coincided with the tenure of independent power by descendants of Katada in Hejaz. With the Meccan Emirs the Rasulid Sultans maintained amicable relations, both parties respecting a boundary which ran north-eastward from Hali Point so as to throw the great northerly tribes of Asir, the Zahran and the Ghamid, as well as the oasis-dwellers of Bisha, into the domain of Mecca. The Grand Sherifs stood consistently between their Rasulid friends and any attempt on the part of Egyptians to assert themselves in Yemen; and the Yemenite Sultans responded by endowing piety and learning at Mecca with foundations similar to those which still commemorate their names at Zabid and Taiz, and by sending an annual *Mahmal* and gift of money with the Pilgrimage. Conspicuous patrons of literature, they have found many more chroniclers of their deeds than the Imams of the once Christian city of Sanaa. As for these—though their enmity to the Rasulids was constant—their relations with Mecca, founded on common Zaidite sympathies in two Sherifial houses, seem to have been equally cordial. But the struggles of the great tribal confederation of the Hashid and Bakil, which held and still holds the uplands north of Sanaa, against powerful tribes of the centre and south, such as the Khaulan and Hamdan, kept the Imamate in a stage of civilization inferior to that attained by the Sultanate of Zabid.

As in Hejaz, so, a little later, during the fifteenth century, in Yemen, action by northern Muslimin, prepared the way of the Osmanlis. About twenty years after Egypt had planted its officers in Jidda and Mecca, the Rasulid dynasty of Zabid came to an end; and the

allegiance of the Beni Tahir, who replaced it, seems to have been claimed by the Circassian Sultans. The novel appearance of Portuguese ships on the coasts of Yemen and their friendly reception provoked Egyptian intervention, which led at last to war. Refused victuals for his ships, Kurd Husain, the admiral of Sultan Ghavri, who would be the last Mameluke, called upon Zaidites from the Highlands to drive the Beni Tahir out of Zabid. The Egyptian governor, as soon as installed there, marched on Taiz, and made an end of the Tahiri dynasty. This was in 1516, when the writing was already on the wall of the Mamelukes' Palace. Kurd Husain heard of the Ottoman triumph in Jidda, whither he had retreated from a fruitless attack on Aden. His lieutenant, who had ventured into the Highlands from Taiz, died without knowledge of it on the way to Mecca; but his successor in Zabid learned that he was to govern for an Osmanli Sultan.

About the rest of Arabia, after the decay of Carmathianism, we know very little. The Baghdad Caliphate made some attempts to reassert its dominion over the east and south-east when that heretical power was no longer formidable, but met with only temporary successes. Its last intervention in Oman was in 1009. Allegiance to an Abbasid was not more congenial to Ibadhi sectaries than Carmathianism had been, and was soon disowned. Thenceforward, for five centuries, Oman was to preserve its independence under elective Imams of the Beni Azd or hereditary *maliks* of the Beni Nabhan. Persian raids from beyond the Gulf in the thirteenth century effected no permanent foreign lodgement; and

the better success of the Portuguese, in the early sixteenth century, affected for a brief spell only a few points on the coast.

§ 7. *Turkish Domination*

THOUGH the Osmanli conquest changed the political condition of the Peninsula only on its western side, and that little—its effect on Yemen was greater than on Hejaz, but less lasting—the historian is bound to make an epoch of it because in combination with certain coincident events, it inaugurated a novel relation of Arabia to the outer world, which has persisted since. The Peninsula had passed long ago from isolation through a stage of subservience to independence again. Henceforward it was to be, for the most part, dependent. If and where its dependence was not on the Ottoman state—this was then a Power of the West, and less an Empire of Islam than a rebirth of Mediterranean Empire—it would depend on other western Powers, which in the sixteenth century had found a new way to Arabia, not through the Mediterranean lands. The discovery of the Cape route was followed by successive apparitions of Portuguese ships off Mascat in 1508, and Jidda in 1514; of English in 1609; of Dutch before 1614, and of French in 1708. The Portuguese got a territorial footing at Aden in 1516, as they had already done in Oman. It was none too firm in either place. Arabia was regarded at Lisbon as a stepping-stone to India; and once the Portuguese had taken Goa they neglected the base degrees by which it had been attained. They were out of Aden again before the close of the century; and

the miserable sufferance, under which they lived at Mascat, was ended before 1760. Other European adventurers were content with licensed factories or agencies. All together, they availed to introduce some solicitude for commerce with Christians and some consequent fear of them, which made a beginning of Arabian submission to a superior civilization. Through succeeding generations the Dutch and the English controlled the external trade of Yemen, and the Yemenites lived in much better harmony with these Infidels than with Turks. Not only the port-towns but the inland cities were then more accessible to Europeans than they have been since the Ottoman Power, having reconquered the country and substituted tribal war for tribal trade, abolished the motive which prompted tolerance of Christian strangers.

On Hejaz Osmanli sovereignty imposed itself less by new means of control or better handling of the control exercised by the Mamelukes, than by prestige. Meccan eyes had grown accustomed to Turks. So long ago as the ninth century the Abbasids had put now and then a Turkish governor into the city; and for novelty they saw now but the more frequent passing of Turkish troops to and from Yemen, whose difficult reduction to his allegiance the Osmanli Sultan desired as much as had Saladin. The northern soldiers hectored and outraged the Meccans; but truculence was not needed to keep the city and its Emirs subservient so long as the prestige of Osmanli primacy in world-warfare endured—that is, through the sixteenth century and far into the seventeenth. Hejaz experienced peace of a kind that it had long forgotten. The son and the grandson of Barakat II, ruling securely

from Khaibar to Hali, were able to inaugurate that hegemony over the great Bedawin tribes of the western centre of the Peninsula, which their descendants would exercise without question in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries and reassert in the twentieth. It embraced the ranges of the Harb, the Ataiba, the Sbai, the Bukum, and the western Mutair and also the oases of Kasim ; and the Meccan Emirs of that period, as their chief European historian has said, stood to the village Emirs of all this region, and even of southern Najd, much as the Osmanli Sultans stood to themselves. In two long reigns, which together covered nearly eighty years of the sixteenth century, the rights and revenues of the Grand Sherifate crystallized into the form which they preserve to-day. An exclusive right to the throne was secured to one, and only one, Sherifial stock. At the present time an undisputed canon of the Meccan succession enacts that no Sherif be eligible who does not ascend in the direct male line to Muhammad Abu Numai II. The reason of his selection as eponymous, rather than his father or any earlier Emir of the line of Katada, is obscure. It may be that he was the first Emir to begin a reign under the authority of an orthodox Caliph, or that he enacted some Domestic Law, such as has governed the Houses of Habsburg and Hohenzollern.

Though Abu Numai and his son, Hasan, were not slow to protest against any action of their masters, which repressed their dynastic ambition or promised to strengthen the foreign control—for instance, against Sultan Suleiman's imposition of an alien Mufti on Mecca in 1539, or the order issued by the same prince in 1547 which

forbade any Grand Sherif to push his dominion south of Hali—we do not hear, before the seventeenth century, of more contumacy than was implied in an occasional fracas with an Emir el-Haj. But, as the century progresses, more serious incidents begin to occur. Sherifial mercenaries fight in the streets with the Turks. An Ottoman governor, on his way to Yemen, is stoned. When the Caliph's representative at Zabid, claiming to overlook the Holy Cities, proposes to purge them of Shiism, he is countered openly and vehemently by Barakat III. Emirs, accused of Zaidism or unseated by mutinous soldiers, find refuge at Sanaa, while Mecca accords like hospitality to Zaidite rebels. In 1639 worse trouble occurred. A Constantinopolitan Grand Mufti paid with his life the score accumulated against aliens holding his office. Hejaz, seeing Yemen slipping from the Osmanlis and Egypt no longer furnishing fleets for the Red Sea, was getting over its fears, though it would still have relapses into panic. After Sultan Murad IV had taken Baghdad, the Grand Sherif, Zaid, made a show of purging his city of heretics, while replenishing his privy purse by accepting ransom of them; but when, in 1642, the Turkish Overseer of the Holy Places had to withdraw from Zabid to Jidda, he found his consideration not a little reduced. Subsequent Meccan Emirs, emboldened further by the Persian renascence and the growth of semi-autonomies in Syria and Egypt, did not hesitate to draw closer their bonds of friendship with Sanaa and strain their relations with Constantinople to dangerous tension. The line of Barakat, which chopped and changed with the line of Zaid throughout the

eighteenth century, worked consistently to recover independence for the Sherifate, which had been enriched by a new external source of wealth. Gifts and contributions of Indians flowed directly into Hejaz since the withdrawal of Ottoman fleets from eastern waters. Therefore the Emirs of that House were able to pursue a popular policy, supporting the poor against the rich, and gaining credit for their throne with the Muslim world; while the rival line, although its eponymous founder and his son, Saad, had been not less anti-Turkish than Barakat, was driven into the Osmanli camp.

Ottoman allegiance had been repudiated, in the meantime, by the rest of the Peninsula. One effort after another to enforce Turkish control on Yemen was followed by relapse to anarchical independence. In Aden, Hadramaut, and Oman, though lip-service might be paid to Turkish admirals touching on their way to fight the Portuguese or the Dutch in Persian and Indian waters, it was never followed by any reality of submission, much less by definite Ottoman occupation; and Young Turks of the twentieth century, who claim any part of Arabia, except Hejaz and Yemen, for ancient territory of the Ottoman Empire, have to base their contention on some momentary propitiation, in this port or that, of a passing sea-captain of Suleiman the Magnificent. Even in Yemen, the tumultuous history of the sixty years or so during which the Ottoman flag was kept flying, forbids belief that Turkish control was effective over any part except Zabid and its ports and neighbourhood; nor even here was it secured for nearly a quarter of a century after the

apparition of the flag. The records of almost a generation tell only of self-styled nominees of the Porte setting up for themselves and being ejected by passing admirals, who in turn eject or kill one another; while Zaidite Imams of Sanaa raid the Lowlands up to the walls of Zabid. Not till after 1540 did an Ottoman Caliph obtain such sure control even of the Tihama as would justify the appointment of a Governor-General with the title of Beylerbey, or any effort to penetrate the Highlands. Taiz became the Turk's in 1545, and Sanaa fell quickly; but to maintain occupation of the last or any upland town proved beyond Osmanli power. After both the south and the north of the Lowlands, the Aden district at one end and Abu Arish at the other, had broken loose again, the Beylerbey had to come to terms with the Zaidite Imam. Yemen was proclaimed all Ottoman in 1565, with provincial capitals at Zabid and Sanaa; but only two years later, the unreality of any such imperial pretension was exposed by the Zaidite feudatory resuming independent control of Sanaa, Taiz, and even Aden, and penning the representatives of his Caliphial suzerain within the walls of Zabid.

Thus defied in the heyday of its power, the Porte put forth as much strength as it could bring to bear upon so remote a province. Sinan Pasha, one of its first commanders, was dispatched, in 1569, to settle the matter with an army marched overland or conveyed in Egyptian ships. The southern Highlands were reduced quickly to temporary submission, but no progress could be made north of Sanaa against the obstinate resistance of the Zaidites in Kaukeban. Once more an Osmanli commander had to cover military failure by diplomatic pretence. The Imam

agreed to hold the Caliph sovereign so long as neither a Turkish soldier nor a Turkish tax-gatherer should show himself on the Highlands; and by observing this Pact the Turks could maintain themselves in Zabid, and, after 1598, also in Aden town. But by the middle of the seventeenth century, when they were no longer absolute masters of Egypt or supreme on any Asiatic sea, the persistent hostility even of the Tihama prevailed against their inability to supply or reinforce an army of occupation. The last Ottoman detachment was evacuated in 1642, and Yemen, after one century of intermittent dependence on Turkey, entered on two centuries of continuous autonomy. Active trade with foreign lands promoted peace. The Imams of Sanaa, content to control the thriving port of Mokha, left the rest of the Tihama to its own tribes and towns; and in the late seventeenth and throughout the eighteenth centuries Yemen revived something of the commercial prosperity of its prehistoric past. Its coffee went over the civilized world; and, as Niebuhr and his Danish companions were to find, its princes and peoples showed an un-Arabian tolerance of strangers. As a result, the fanatical storm which was to break over the Peninsula before the eighteenth century closed will be seen to develop its least energy there. Yemen was the one Arabian province that Wahabism found and left cold.

§ 8. *Wahabites and Egyptians*

THAT storm burst in the last quarter of the eighteenth century from a region which twice already had tried to impose on all Arabia its dour enthusiasm for Oneness, and still retained the temper of both attempts. After

their Carmathian passion had cooled, the xenelastic farmers of southern Najd found cold comfort in the bosom of Orthodoxy by rallying to the ascetic literalism of the Hanbalite rite, which hardly any other Arabs have followed and Mecca still leaves without an official leader in public worship. The Najdean spirit leads the oasis-dwellers to reject all but the simplest doctrine of Islam, and to regard expansions or interpretations of this by any society, living under other conditions than theirs, as offences against the God they have made in their own image. Such a spirit (not, of course, unknown elsewhere in the histories of other creeds) remains passive in stern self-righteousness till reminded with sufficient force that man's responsibility to the One God of the Universe cannot be acquitted by securing Him less than universal honour. When a Revivalist has convinced a Chosen People that the peculiar dishonour of each of its members is involved in the dishonour of God by any other people, action to vindicate Him appears as personal an obligation as it seemed to every Knight and burgher who manned a Crusade, or any Companion who charged at Badr to slay his kin.

About the year 1740 the necessary Revivalist appeared in the valley which had risen to the call of Maslama more than a thousand years before. A certain Muhammad Abd el-Wahhab, who had studied at Baghdad under Literalist teachers, and become a doctor of the Law, returned to exhort his fellow villagers to vindicate the Oneness of God, whom they alone amid an idolatrous worldly-minded generation were holding in due honour. Was not His wrath manifest in the misfortunes of Islam?

Let the world be compelled to observe His single Word and the sole example of His Apostle's life, repudiating all that was not in the first ordinance, and all the authority past or present of such as had added to, or subtracted from, it by the light of human understanding. He made an early convert of Saud, the most important local Emir, of a line that had ruled Daraiya for generations; and this man, who was of Anazeh blood, made it his business to convey to the Bedawins of his tribe and others the simplest statement of his Teacher's gospel of Simplicity, using the same sanctions that had served the Prophet with nomads—assurance of a Kingdom of this world and of more than its delights in the next to those who would believe and follow the only way; but of ruin now and eternal damnation hereafter to all who would not. The desert offered a field even more favourable than the oases. In the thousand years which had elapsed since Islam was preached, the natural religiosity of the Bedawins had lost all positive religion and lapsed into mechanical paganism. Now they craved a message of faith that could be understood, and called for warlike action.

By 1770 Saud had established the joint authority of his Teacher and himself over all the villages of Aridh and the neighbouring nomads, and he began to be talked of in the rest of Arabia as a coming Emir. A great comet, which shone in the sky that year, was believed to forerun a Scourge of God; but the Meccan Emirs of the last half of the eighteenth century were slow to observe the signs of the times. Sarur, and Ghalib after him, were too busy with razzias towards Asir on the one hand and Kasim on the other. The latter, who had trouble with home

tribes, the Thakif, the Hudhayl, and the Dhawi Hasan, is said to have made over a half a hundred such expeditions; and he continued so to occupy himself even after the seething brew in Najd had risen to boiling point and streamed out northward to purge the offence committed against the Oneness of God by the veiled Incarnationist worship offered to Ali and his sons at the Tomb mosques of Najaf and Karbala.

An Emir of Najd, who had harried Irak, could not long be ignored; and Sherif Ghalib tried at last, in 1799, to stave off the eastern menace. Saud professed to accept a delimitation which left to Mecca the Ataiba steppe, the Harb *dira* and all northern Asir; and himself repaired to the Holy City for the Great Feast of 1800, followed by a horde of wild warriors who excited much unrest, taxing all Ghalib's authority or diplomacy to prevent conflict with his own retainers. The unwelcome guests withdrew in peace; but their leader had seen too much of Meccan idolatries and weakness to be disposed to respect his agreement of the year before. A few months later his Wahabites descended on Hali, and one of the strongest of Ghalib's tribes, the Zahran, went over to their communion. The Emir of Mecca sent an embassy to Daraiya to demand satisfaction; but his chief envoy and right-hand man, Uthman el-Madhaifi, incontinently accepted the new creed, and appearing before Taif in 1803, captured and held it for the enemy. A year later, Saud entered Mecca itself, and before he marched on to Medina, Ghalib was a wandering fugitive, unable to find a refuge even with his own Harb. Both Holy Cities underwent as drastic a purgation as the Shiite shrines,

being stripped of treasures and all vain gauds even to the golden plating of the dome of the Prophet's Tomb. The Black Stone was not harmed—indeed Ali Bey, the disguised Spanish pilgrim of 1807, saw a mob of Wahabites as fervent to kiss it as any Meccans; but all other things regarded by Saud as objects of idolatry were thrown down, broken or removed. This done, the iconoclasts went home. Ghalib returned and tried to restore his authority. He retook Lith, but saw Yambo occupied by Harbi Wahabites. The Syrian *mahmal* and pilgrim caravan of 1805 could not get through, and even a clan of the royal Meccan line, the Abadilah, declared for the enemy. The traitor, Uthman, came down from Taif to besiege Mecca; and a few months later it passed definitely under a Wahabite control which endured for five years, Ghalib subsisting on sufferance the while.

Saud, as well as his Teacher, was now dead; and his son, Abd el-Aziz, who sat on the Wahabite throne, had secured by summons or armed force the more or less sincere adhesion of all the Peninsula, except the southwest. The ranges of the great Shammar tribe in northern Najd, and the country beyond the Nafud, from Jauf to the head of Wadi Sirhan, were his, and he raided northward almost to Damascus. The Porte became alarmed lest the history of Arabian invasion were about to repeat itself in Syria, and the Caliph was harassed by appeals from the Faithful that the Holy Cities and the Pilgrim roads might be freed from a worse than Carmathian terror. Once more the mass of external Muslim opinion declared against ascetic Puritanism.

But what could the Caliph do with mutinous Janis-

saries, an untried *nizam* and no fleet to speak of? He found himself in the midst of a general European war with a hundred local powers in his Asiatic provinces refusing or evading his levies. In despair he turned to the self-created Viceroy of Egypt, whom he feared more than he loved. To be Liberator of the Holy Places would suit Mehemet Ali's book, and the lesser evil of his aggrandizement might be redressed later. The ambitious Viceroy accepted the commission, gathered an army of Albanians, *fellahin*, and adventurers and sent it to Yambo, in 1811, with his son, Tusun. There it lingered till it grew rotten with disease; and when it tried to move southward to Mecca, it could not force the notorious pass of Wadi Safra against the Harb. The Viceroy placed a second force under his eldest son, Ibrahim, and prepared its way by buying the hostile tribes. In 1812 this delivered Medina, and went on to Jidda.

The Wahabite power, which rested less on military compulsion than on spiritual influence, had not been able to assimilate the Hejazis; and Ghalib, promising the restoration of the Pilgrimage, had reasserted his authority in Mecca, though not in Taif. He was not disposed to see a deliverer in the Egyptian Viceroy, who had now come in person to Hejaz, but could not refuse to admit him to Mecca. Ibrahim settled accounts easily with Uthman el-Madhaifi at Taif, and sent the rebel by way of Cairo to Constantinople to meet inevitable death. But Ghalib gained nothing thereby: for Mehemet Ali, who cherished no illusions about his profession of loyalty, took an early opportunity to dispatch him in the wake of his ex-minister. He died three years later in Salonica. Yahya, a son of

Sarur, was appointed to the Sherifate, but to no reality of power. The Viceroy returned to Cairo but left an agent behind him, whose word was law; and the supine Meccans, fed with Egyptian corn and salaried with Egyptian gold, courted Ahmad Pasha and not their Emir. The Sherifial clans resumed their normal family quarrels, and Yahya pushed feud to the point of stabbing a rival in the precinct of the Kaaba. He fled to the Harb; and in 1827 his cousin, Abd el-Muttalib, Ghalib's son, was preferred in his room.

Before that date the Wahabite power had passed into eclipse. Taught by Tusun's failure, Mehemet Ali enjoined inaction on Ibrahim till the co-operation or, at least, neutrality of the tribes of the Central steppe could be purchased; and it was not till 1817 that he gave the word to move eastwards. Ibrahim set out from Medina for Kasim and found the desert way open; but Rass, the first walled town in the oasis, kept him outside for many months. When this at length had been reduced, he passed on, without further serious fighting, into Wadi Hanifa and, sweeping up lesser villages and towns, sat down before Daraiya. The Wahabite capital proved more obstinate than Rass; and Ibrahim had to await reinforcements of guns and men from Egypt before he could reduce it to the ruin it remains to-day, and send the Wahabite prince to Egypt and thence to Constantinople, to die by order of Sultan Mahmud. Ibrahim's troops passed on into Hasa, and this province with all Central Arabia, including Jebel Shammar, was brought under Egyptian administration, the general making his headquarters at Bureida in Kasim. But his father had no

mind to spend his resources on barren possessions; and Ibrahim was bidden withdraw all troops to Medina again, and hold only Hejaz.

The Yemen Tihama, occupied since 1813, was handed over to the Imam of Sanaa, but would be reoccupied by the Egyptians in 1832. It vexed Mehemet Ali that he could never subdue Asir, and so make the west Arabian lands one continuous Egyptian province. Points on the coast could be dominated by his fleets; and a minor Sherifian principality in the Lowland of Abu Arish, the present home of the Idrisi house, leagued itself with him. But a federation of great Highland tribes which, under the Aidh family, had thrown in their lot with the Wahabites, proved from first to last too strongly placed to be brought to book. The Egyptians, with help from the Emir of Mecca, did indeed reach and occupy their chief town, Menadir, the present Ebha, in 1834, but at such a point of exhaustion that they were glad to evacuate at once on terms.

After Yahya's crime and flight in 1827, Mehemet Ali had had enough of the Zaid line of Grand Sherifs. He refused to confirm his representative's choice of Ghalib's son, and thought well to introduce to power a new clan of Abu Numai's descendants. In the chief of the Abadilah, Muhammad el-Aun, grandfather of the present King Husain, he found a man who had proved himself able to keep the northern Asiri tribes in order. He supported his new Emir against a revolt of Taif, excited by Yahya and Abd el-Muttalib, only to find that Muhammad was to prove no exception to the rule that a Grand Sherif, by whomsoever established, will turn on his Kingmaker. An

ill-defined jurisdiction of the Sherifate over tribes outside the territorial limits of Hejaz was (and is still) a frequent cause of trouble; and when the former Egyptian representative, Ahmad Pasha, reappeared in Mecca to Muhammad's disgust in 1833, an occasion of strife was quickly found in the Emir's claim to tax for his exclusive purse certain Asiri feudatories of the Sherifate who had fallen away to Wahabism but been reclaimed by Egyptian arms. The two authorities appealed to Caesar and to Caesar each had to go in 1836. Mecca did its best for four years without an Emir at all.

The Egyptian episode, though it lasted but one generation, had certain effects, direct and indirect, on Arabia which long outlasted the date in the 'forties on which the last Egyptian soldier evacuated the Peninsula—effects much the same in kind as are credited to Mehemet Ali's occupation of Syria. It served to bring Arabia not only more within European knowledge than all the previous centuries had brought it, but also (doubtful blessing!) into the arena of European politics. Mehemet Ali laid science under an obligation by rendering possible the sojourns of Burckhardt and Seetzen in the Holy Cities and encouraging visits to other parts of Hejaz by Europeans of less importance, such as Bankes, Hamilton, and several French and Italian officers and doctors, some of whom accompanied his forces into Asir. Burckhardt he personally protected and helped though well aware that behind his disguise was a Switzer, sent out by a British anti-slavery society to undertake work of no direct advantage to Egypt; and although he was not responsible for the coming of Sadlier

to Arabia in 1818, it was the Egyptian occupation of Najd and the protection and forwarding offered by Egyptian troops that alone enabled this officer to be the first European to describe the Wahabite country and cross the Peninsula from sea to sea. With Sadlier's narrative and the invaluable information collected at Medina by Burckhardt for *Notes on the Bedouins and Wahabis*, Central Arabia ceased to be Terra Incognita. Of less but considerable importance was the light thrown upon Asir and the Yemen Tihama through Egyptian expeditions and occupations.

This moment was not, of course, the beginning of European economic and political interest in Arabia; but it was the first to cause a Great Christian Power to feel lively apprehension lest another forestall it in a land previously considered of no moment, and to take measures to secure its footing. The issue of the Napoleonic Wars had decided the Indian duel in favour of Great Britain; but since another challenge seemed still possible, the victor watched with jealous eyes the passing of control on both shores of the Red Sea, to which the establishment of the 'Overland Service' had given new importance, into the hands of a potentate so intimately associated with France and so largely advised by Frenchmen as the Egyptian Viceroy. On this account Great Britain not only placed her Arabian consular service under direct Imperial control, in 1825, and raised the status and quality of her representatives—a measure which France countered by making a like change in her own service at Jidda—but, in 1839, she required the petty sultan of Lahej to lease to her in perpetuity the port and

peninsula of Aden, whose possession had been disputed for three centuries by Arabs, Portuguese, Dutch, and Turks. Thus did a power of Christian Europe establish sovereignty at the mainland point of Arabia which not only watches the outer Gate of the Red Sea, but offers the only capacious, sheltered, and reef-free harbour in the Peninsula. Twenty years later she would pocket the key of that Gate by reoccupying the island of Perim.

These were not the only measures by which Great Britain, out of jealousy for her Indian Empire, involved Arabia in external politics. Already she had taken steps to obtain a controlling influence upon the eastern coast of the Peninsula. Economic, rather than political, motives (some protection of the pearl-fisheries being demanded by Bombay) prompted her first moves. The East India Company had induced both a newly-established ruling House of the Bahrain Islands in 1820 and thirty years later the Sheikhs of the 'Pirate Coast' to enter into engagements under which, in return for political support and a subsidy, each acknowledged a British right to repress piracy and other disturbances of trade in his dominion, guaranteed protection to British traders and agreed to accept an accredited agent of the British Government. An earlier treaty had followed a dynastic change in Oman. This region had been longer acquainted with Europeans; for the Portuguese from Hormuz who had settled on the coast as far back as 1508, during the weak rule of Imams of the Beni Azd, held on to some points, for example, to forts at Mascat, Matra, and Sohar, until after the middle of the succeeding century. In the eighteenth century the Yaruba Imams, unable to make

head against the anti-Yemenite faction of the Beni Ghafir, called in Persian soldiery from Nadir Shah, only to find the chauvinism of all the Omanite tribesmen, whether Hinawi or Ghafiri, combine against them. In 1741 their dynasty gave way to that which now rules in Mascat. The Said House being not of the blue blood of either ancient faction, but descended from traders, who had ridden to power on a transient wave of popular anger, found itself compelled to rely on mercenaries and seek new means to pay them. The second Sultan of the line, therefore, moving his residence from Rastak to the sea-coast, opened negotiations with the East India Company; and, in 1798, a treaty was made which has committed Great Britain ever since to support the rulers of Mascat against the people of Oman.

Wahabism, propagated on the east coast of Arabia, was threatening then to defeat British aims in the Gulf, and it was Sadlier's mission in 1818 to report both on this danger and the possibility of its being replaced by a worse —a permanent occupation of the coast by the Egyptians. Neither of these dangers was realized; but memories of them determined the British authorities in India to make their Gulf Agreements exclude equal access by any other Power. When the treaties with Bahrain and Oman were renewed respectively in 1880 and 1891, provisions were introduced which preclude their rulers from accepting other subsidies than British, or leasing land to any Government without British consent.

An ulterior consequence of the Egyptian episode in Arabia, as in Syria, is also important. Mehemet Ali introduced the beginnings of settled government and so

far broke Arab resistance that the Porte, when reinstated by the European Powers in direct administration of its Arab provinces, became able to control them as it had never done before. But this facility did not follow quite immediately. When a disastrous collapse in Syria forced Mehemet Ali in the early 'forties to evacuate his provinces of Hejaz and Yemen, and, incidentally, to reinstate Muhammad el-Aun, the sorely tried Turk, having no fleet on the Red Sea, was not in a position to take up the whole of what the Viceroy had to hand over. The Yemen Tihama was left for nearly ten years to the doubtful enjoyment of independence under competing local chiefs, among whom Sherif Husain, of Abu Arish, grown rich on Egyptian rewards, succeeded, after 1843, in establishing overlordship by the nominal mandate of the Ottoman Caliph. At last, in 1849, the Turks, encouraged by assurances from the Emir of Mecca that there was no strength behind Sherif Husain and that Yemen would gladly be rid of him, disembarked a force at Hodeida. It quickly gained control of the Tihama towns, and was able even to march into Sanaa, unseat the Zaidite Imam, and procure the election of another Rassite.

In Hejaz, though a Turkish *vali* appeared at Jidda in 1840, the real power passed at first, not to him, but to Muhammad el-Aun, who, true to the traditions of his House, ignored, when he dared not flout, the representative of his sovereign and set himself to regain the eighteenth-century territorial and tribal hegemonies of his Emirate. When Wahabism, scotched not killed, reared its head again under Faisal es-Saud in Riadh,

the new-built capital of Wadi Hanifa, the Emir of Mecca thought well to march up into Kasim in 1846 and not only to compel Faisal to tributary acknowledgement of inferiority, but also to foster intrigues which led presently to the latter going into exile for some three years.

As a permanent makeweight to Riadh, the growth of a rival Emirate at Hail, in Jebel Shammar, was encouraged by Muhammad. This district, held by a strong fighting tribe, had been faintly Wahabite and loosely feudatory to Daraiya since the beginning of the century; but it remained under the local control of the Abda clan of the Shammar. One of its chiefs, Sheikh Abdullah of the Rashid house, took advantage of the eclipse of the Saud dynasty during the 'thirties to make himself virtually independent, relying on a paid body-guard for present protection, and his formidable tribe for future aggression. By 1846 he felt strong enough, with encouragement from the Grand Sherif, to cut adrift; and during Faisal's exile he consolidated his position behind the screen of autonomous Kasim, whose democratic towns owned no allegiance beyond an obligation of courtesy and alms to the Grand Sherifate. Later rulers of the Rashid house, conspicuous equally for their ability and for their ruthlessness—no other dynasty of Arabs is so blood-guilty as this—have maintained that position and even improved it at the expense of their former overlords. Alone among the princes of the Peninsula they constantly courted Ottoman friendship, without which their lean homeland could not obtain its necessary supplement of supplies from the Euphratean marches. But they have

trusted the desert ring about them, and the fighting fame of the Shammar, to safeguard their autonomy from their friend.

§ 9. *Turkish Restoration*

In the 'fifties the Ottoman State, which had found of late more than one capable Grand Vezir, was sufficiently reinvigorated to tighten its grip on Arabia. We have seen it regain its footing in Yemen in 1849. Two years later it took the recalcitrant Sherifate in hand. Muhammad el-Aun was shipped with his sons to Constantinople to repent of contumacy during a five-year exile, and Abd el-Muttalib, of the rival Zaid line, was installed in his stead. The change proved, as usual, for the worse. Mecca lapsed into anarchy; and after a street riot excited by the anti-slavery clause of the famous 'Hatti Humayun', Sultan Abdul Mejid reinstated Muhammad, while his rival, retrieved from a futile flight to Taif, was conducted back to Constantinople. Two years later, Muhammad died. The Porte adhered to the Abadilah line for lack of a better, and permitted his son, Abdullah, who had been kept in honourable detention at Pera, to succeed. His proved a very uneasy throne. Local resentment against interference with the slave-trade remained unappeased, and July 1858 saw it come to a head in a riot at Jidda which cost the lives of two European consular officers and of many Arabs killed in the retaliatory bombardment. The Porte had to send down a Commission of reorganization, after whose visit Mecca was to feel, for half a century, the hand of the

Ottoman *vali* press ever more heavily. In the 'eighties the Sherifate fell to a lower depth of humiliation than it had touched in its record of nine centuries. The opening of a direct water-way from Constantinople through the Suez Canal—an event of capital importance to the Peninsula for good and ill—had increased, since 1870, the possibility of Ottoman control in western Arabia; and the ill-supplied forces, which, during the 'sixties, had arrived in Hejaz and Asir too exhausted to keep open the way to Yemen, were followed by levies, which had been spared a three months' march. Accordingly, in 1872, Mukhtar Pasha was able to respond to an invitation from citizens of Sanaa by marching into the Imam's capital and restricting him again to the ancient holding of his ancestors in the north.

Trouble continued to follow trouble in the Sherifate. Emir Abdullah had to submit, in 1869, to the imposition of municipal organization on the lines of Ottoman Gallicism; and in 1880, his brother and successor, the mild and liberal Husain, who befriended Doughty, fell a sacrifice at Jidda to an assassin emboldened by popular contempt for politic princes. Once more the Porte resorted to the futile expedient of restoring the Zaid line; but the energetic officer, Osman Nuri Pasha, who had been sent to effect the change, had to unseat Abd el-Muttalib again after two years and recall the Abadilah. Under Aun, called er-Rafik (the Comrade), the Sherifate touched bottom. Its hegemony over the Ataiba and the oases of Kasim fell into abeyance; and the Harb, defying any law but their own, used the sacred ways for plunder and blackmail, inaugurating a generation during

which the pious Faithful were to find the Pilgrimage hardly less painful than at the worst moments of the Middle Age.

While the West of the Peninsula no longer knew liberty except in anarchy, the Ottoman Power was encroaching on the East. Midhat Pasha secured Hasa in 1871, and dreamed of a further advance into Najd. In the South the British were establishing a Protectorate in fact, if not in name, over the coast-lands from Perim to Makalla; while ever more insistently they enforced their authority upon the Bahrain Islands, the Pirate Coast, and the Omanic Sultanate. Only in the heart of the Peninsula was freedom preserved; but even here encroachments by one or both of those competing Powers began to be feared. The Wahabite Emirate had recovered sufficient strength since the middle of the century to attract attention not only from the Government of India, but also from France, who hoped that the Suez Canal would enable her to recover some of her lost empire in the East. The aged Emir, Faisal, found himself solicited in Riadh itself. In 1863 appeared the Roman Catholic Jew, Gifford Palgrave, sent by Napoleon III; and two years later arrived Lewis Pelly, British Resident at Bushire, who had been commissioned to outbid his predecessor. The defeat of France in 1870 made her effort in Arabia abortive; but the British overture led to an informal understanding between Najd and the controlling Power in the Gulf, which did not, however, imply as yet any loss of the former's independence.

The younger Emirate of Jebel Shammar also began to attract foreign notice. Palgrave, who passed through

Hail, observed the solidarity of the great Shammar tribe and surmised that its vitality might overbear one day the heterogeneous group of oasis populations and small tribes in South Najd, whose only cement was a discredited sectarianism. The event justified him. A dozen years later the Rashid throne was attained, amid the usual horrors, by one Muhammad, who wiped the blood of kinsmen off his hands to become a ruler of force and capacity, rarely shown by Arabs. Renewing the politic friendship of his line with the Ottoman Power in Irak, he threw down a gage to his rival of Riadh, who had been weakened by the Turkish occupation of Hasa. The comparative wealth of the Kasim towns, Buraida and Anaiza, which command the trans-peninsular trade-route from Kuwait to Hejaz, became the prize in dispute. Hail lies nearer to them than Riadh, and since the Shammar are neighbours more formidable than any nomads who owe allegiance to the House of Saud, Muhammad er-Rashid found little difficulty in establishing a dominating influence over Kasim during the 'eighties. Having secured from its adhesion sufficient resources to buy over the Eastern Harb and the Mutair tribes, he brought the Saud Emir, in 1891, to a decisive battle, the greatest in Central Arabian history since the triumph of Islam. Prevailing he entered Riadh, from which Abdurrahman, the last of Faisal's sons, had fled; and Hail became the single capital of Central Arabia from Jauf el-Amr to the Great South Desert. His son, however, who succeeded in 1896, proved unequal to so wide a dominion. The Kasim democracies and the Aridh villages felt dishonoured by

his hegemony; and old Abdurrahman and his son, Abdul Aziz, reading aright the signs of the times, left their refuge in Kuwait and rode for Riadh. The fort and the Rashidian governor were surprised: Aridh welcomed a Saud restoration; and Kasim submitted, pending occasion to break loose from both their Houses.

Unable to repair his loss unaided, the Emir of Hail did what his father would not have done—he called the Turk into Central Arabia for the first time. Columns, dispatched from Irak and from Medina, effected, at the cost of much suffering on desert tracks, a momentary occupation of Kasim. But trouble in Yemen called away the Ottoman leader and the best of his troops. The rest deserted or were expelled; and Abdul Aziz, now Emir of Riadh by his father's consent, restored the occupation which has endured ever since. In his own way almost as remarkable a ruler as Muhammad er-Rashid, Abdul Aziz has become the outstanding figure among the actual princes of Arabia—a man whose personal qualities may yet win him as wide a realm as was held by the Founder of his House.

Before the nineteenth century closed the Asian Policy of Abdul Hamid began to affect Arabia. The Caliph, determined to have a way of his own to the Holy Cities and to Yemen, increased his garrisons and his subsidies to Bedawins, along the Pilgrim Road, and, taught by the Greek war of 1897, fostered the construction of a railway to supersede it. At an immense cost, which was met in part by contributions from the pious of all the Muslim world, the iron track was pushed south

from trans-Jordania. By 1908 it had attained the gate of Medina; but beyond this point opposition from the Harb deterred the engineers from attempting greater difficulties of terrain. The Porte suspected the Sherifate behind the Bedawins, and avenged its check by dethroning the ruling Emir, Ali. · It was a moment of constitutional upheaval in Turkey, and an Anglophile Grand Vezir took British advice before nominating a successor. The family of the ex-Emir was debarred; Abdilah, last survivor of the sons of Muhammad el-Aun, lay at the point of death; but his nephew, Husain, who had lived long at Constantinople and was well stricken in years, seemed likely to rule unambitiously and with due consideration of his sovereign's interests and the susceptibilities of Christian Powers. Accordingly he was nominated to a throne which he had had little reason to expect.

The Hamidian Idea achieved less result in other parts of Arabia. Repeated attempts by the Vali of Basra to strengthen Turkish hold on the Gulf were stultified by the Government of India in both Bahrain and Kuwait; and the latter town was brought, in 1899, under effective British influence. If zealous pan-Islamic propaganda persuaded leaders of prayer in Hadramaut, Oman, and Najd to acknowledge in the *Khutba* the spiritual primacy of the Ottoman Caliph, there was either no response or a hostile one whenever and wherever this religious courtesy was followed by a political claim. The Emirate of Jebel Shammar maintained its traditional relations and treated enemies of the Turks in Najd and Kuwait as enemies of itself; but it did not allow such services

as the Turkish columns rendered in Kasim in 1904 and 1905 to entail any further intervention in its internal affairs. Its loss of Jauf el-Amr to Nuri Shaalan of the Ruwalla Anazeh, in 1910, only removed its frontier farther from Ottoman reach.

In Yemen, the Turkish representatives made persistent efforts to expand the area of their dominion or influence; but with no better effect than to keep the Northern Highlands in intermittent ferment after 1890. The Southern fringe also grew so unquiet that in the interests of trade as well as prestige the British power demanded definite delimitation of the frontier; and, abandoning its original policy of non-intervention beyond the Aden peninsula, it proceeded to assert counter-influence by a military demonstration through the territories of the Chiefs, who had signed its treaties—a demonstration which entailed punitive operations here and there. But the Young Turks would accept no fixed boundary till one more revolt, the most grave of a long series, convinced them that for the present they must compromise all round or lose South-west Arabia. The line which at last was delimited ran inland from Sheikh Said to Kataba. Thence it was prolonged, undelimited, to a point on the Persian Gulf, south of the peninsula of Dohar. But hardly was final agreement reached, before the entry of Turkey into the Great War of 1914 suspended its effect.

The series of Yemenite revolts had begun as far back as 1891 with a general rising of the Hashid, Bakil, and other tribesmen of the Northern Highlands, against the observance of the concordat of 1872. Rejecting

an Imam, who acquiesced in Sunnite usurpation, they constrained a certain Muhammad el-Kasim, a Rassite of Saada, to lead them in strength upon Amran, Manakha, and Sanaa; and the Porte had to draw heavily on its man-power in Anatolia and Syria, where the name of Yemen had spelled disease and death for twenty years, before it could push the rebels back to the North. Twelve years later they returned to the charge, in the name, though not under the actual command, of Muhammad's son, Yahya, whom in the interval they had proclaimed Imam. This time they got into Sanaa itself, and relinquished it only after a year on the approach of a strong relief force brought up by Ahmad Faizi Pasha, who had abandoned Ibn Rashid in Kasim for the more instant need of Yemen. Even in retreat, the rebels scored points: the Turkish commander had to agree to accept and subsidize their Imam, and leave to him the guns and arms he had captured. In 1910 these were to come into use again upon Turkey's embarrassment in the Tripolitan war. Yahya then allied himself with a new aspirant to independence. This was Muhammad el-Idris, grandson of Ahmad el-Idris, a stranger from Fez, who, after attaining wide repute for pious learning in Mecca as leader of a religious group, visited Zabid and settled finally at the village of Sabia under the sherifs of Abu Arish in Mikhlaf el-Yemen. Canonized locally for a Saint on his death, in 1837, he left his son and grandson to acquire such wealth and influence from the miraculous virtues of his tomb, that his house succeeded to the political leadership which Sherif Husain had lost when discredited and ruined by the return of the Turks to

Yemen in 1849. Muhammad el-Idris, fourth of the line, passed some years in Egypt at the Azhar University and in Dongola, and a short time with the Senussiya. When he returned to Sabia early in the present century, he had developed into a man of conspicuous physique and mental activity, who was determined to use his superior education and administrative capacity for the enhancement of his estate. The Turks took little heed of him, and the Emir of Mecca ignored the *parvenu*. But the Imam Yahya, who had watched him organize an effective administration in Mikhlaf el-Yemen, and acquire not a little influence with the highland tribes of southern Asir, welcomed an ally who might cover his rear, when he should move south. Accordingly, when he renewed rebellion in 1910, Idrisi followed suit by marching on Ebha, the Turkish head-quarters in Asir; but he could not bring his allies, the Beni Mughaid, to drive home his early success, and the Turks, effectively helped by Emir Husain of Mecca, had time to move up a superior force.

When Idrisi's federation had fallen back, the Imam, who had occupied Sanaa once again, but expected less to hold it than compel his enemy to further concessions, broke faith with his unsuccessful ally. A Turkish Commander-in-Chief, Izzet Pasha, fought his way up to the Highlands, relieved Manakha, and recaptured Sanaa; but so great was his loss in men and material that he could not but agree with Emir Husain who had advised him in Hejaz to make such terms with the irrepressible Imam as might preclude a repetition of Yemenite revolt. He offered Yahya liberal terms and secured their acceptance;

but he had to go to Stambul before the Imperialists would ratify a Pact which not only secured to the Imam a large increase of subsidy and armament, but also recognized his religious jurisdiction in Sanaa and all the southern Highlands. The Zaidite intransigence of the tribes was not wholly appeased by such a Pact; but their greed and the Imam's, coupled with an increase in the numbers and efficiency of the Turkish garrison, served to keep it unbroken even through the Great European War.

§ 10. *Turkish Decline and Fall*

WHATEVER the success of the Hamidian policy in Arabia, its effects were nowhere robust enough to survive the Revolution of 1908. Constitutional ideals promised nothing that Arabian chiefs and tribes desired; while the Young Turk policy of assimilating all races to one warmed their indifference to hostility. They watched successive blows suffered by Turkish military prestige in the Italian and Balkan Wars, and hope of being left wholly to themselves grew strong. The first-fruits of that hope had been the Revolt of 1910 in South-western Arabia, which has just been mentioned. If the Emir of Mecca consented still to help the Turks with his arms in Asir and his advice in Yemen, he had assumed a new hortatory tone and a defiant attitude when the Turk, distrusting his pretension to tribal power, refused to accept his intercession on behalf of the Asiri rebels. He was not fulfilling the promise of his obscure life before accession. Hardly arrived at Mecca in 1908, he took steps to revive by diplomacy the hegemony of his throne among the tribes of Western Najd, which had been left in

abeyance for at least two sherifian reigns; and in 1910 he clinched the negotiations by an expedition which captured the brother of Abdul Aziz and imposed on Riadh formal recognition of the Meccan claim to alms from Kasim and to overlordship of the Ataiba.

As for Abdul Aziz of Najd, he was already at odds with the Turks for their support of the Rashid cause in Kasim, and he credited them now with responsibility for the humiliation inflicted by their Meccan vassal. Retaliating with a series of raids upon Ottoman feudatories in the Shatt el-Arab district, he strengthened his understanding with Kuwait, which dated from the days of his asylum in that town. Its Sheikh, Mubarak, relying on the immunity which the presence of a British Resident had secured him since 1903, was willing enough to co-operate by attacking the Turk's Muntafik allies. Both princes harried Jebel Shammar also, whose Emir was now the boy, Saud, placed on the Rashid throne in 1908, under the tutelage of certain cousins of the Subhan family. Thus assaulted on the one side, while on the other he had to fear Nuri Shaalan and his Ruwalla, Ibn Rashid was forced to draw the Shammar close about him, maintain an understanding with Mecca which had sheltered his childhood, and renew his father's overtures to the Ottoman power in Irak. The situation was soon to be worse both for the latter and for him. In the spring of 1913 Abdul Aziz swooped upon Hasa, took Hofuf at once and Katif after a short siege, and bundled the Turks, soldiers and civilians alike, out of a province which they had held for over forty years. That done, he proceeded to solicit such support from the British power in the Gulf as

his ally of Kuwait enjoyed; and though a year later he found it prudent to render lip-service to Ottoman suzerainty, he has since held Hasa as absolutely at his own pleasure as Najd.

Such was the unfavourable position of the Ottoman power in Arabia a year before the great European War. It improved a little upon that revival of Turkey's prestige at home, which followed her escape from the Balkan War, and the demonstration made in her favour by the Central European Powers; and when the Syrian Irredentist movement collapsed in 1913, Arab princes, like Abdul Aziz and Husain, who had been privy to its plans, betrayed uneasiness. Idrisi opened a bargain for Ottoman recognition, and the Imam Yahya settled down to keep the Agreement of 1912 in spirit as well as letter. The Porte profited also by difficulties in which the British Power was involved in both its chief Arabian spheres of influence, Aden and Oman. The unrest of the first district was a comparatively small matter, but sufficient to make Great Britain anxious to conclude the Boundary negotiations in a spirit of reasonable compromise. In Oman a rebellion, which had long been smouldering, gathered strength enough, by May 1913, to abolish the Sultan's authority inland, and even to threaten his coastal towns. British Indian troops had to be landed in July and reinforced in September to maintain the Saidite dynasty, which is despised for its dependence on Christians, for its acceptance of their control of its traffic in arms, and for its lack of piety and learning.

If, however, Ottoman prestige stood a little higher in Arabia at the moment of the outbreak of war in 1914

than it had stood since 1908, the feeling of Arab towards Turk had everywhere been embittered by the collapse of those hopes of Home Rule which the Constitutional Movement had once encouraged; and it was to grow yet more bitter during the short interval before Turkey would be actually at war. The idealist members of the Committee of Union and Progress, exalted by the prospect of an active alliance with the first military power in Europe, hardened their hearts against alien races, and more than ever insisted on conformity to the Turco-Ottoman unity. Abdul Aziz, Mubarak, and Idrisi were bluntly summoned to accept Ottoman livery, the first as a *vali* of Najd, the others as mere *kaimmakams*; Turkish troops were introduced into the stronghold of the Imam Yahya, and the Emir of Mecca was bidden by a new Governor-General prepare the Sherifate and Hejaz to accept conscription for the first time in four centuries.

Husain had long desired an opportunity for a revolt, which might force Arab Home Rule upon the Caliph; but not till after the outbreak of the War was he informed that he might count on the support of Great Britain, if and when Turkey should join the Central Powers in the field. But when the latter declared herself, on the last day of October, he did not move. The Turk was watching the Arab. It was for the Allies to divert his attention. Would they succeed in throwing such a force on to the Northern frontier of the Arabs as could cut off the Turks? In the meantime, while he sent his son, Abdullah, into the centre of the Peninsula to push his interests in Kasim and with the Ataiba, he conciliated his Turkish masters in the ways that committed him

least. The recruits that were demanded of him, he enlisted from casuals and strangers as a regimental unit of *fedais* (volunteers) paid by himself, in order to avoid the introduction of Ottoman conscription into Hejaz. Nor was he yielding ground when he agreed, in March 1915, to save a party from the German ship *Emden*, which was held up by local tribesmen of the Harb in an attempt to reach Jidda overland from Lith. On the contrary, the affair demonstrated that he, not the Turks, gave law to the Bedawins of Hejaz.

On the rest of Arabia Turkey's entry into the War caused no serious repercussion for some time. When the Sheikh of Kuwait renounced fealty to the Ottoman Empire in November 1914, he changed nothing in fact. When Ibn Rashid marched against Ibn Saud at the end of the year, it was to play but one more hand in the familiar match between Hail and Riadh. The rival Emirs joined issue near Mejmaa in Sedeir, and broke off with honours even, Ibn Saud being worsted in the fighting, and Ibn Rashid losing his camp and so much camel-train that he was easily persuaded to retire on Jebel Shammar. Captain Shakespear, who had been accepted by Abdul Aziz as British agent at his court, watched the battle by his own desire, and, by misfortune, was killed. The loose British blockade of the Red Sea coast, and the denial of Egyptian corn to Hejaz, promised more effect in the future than was produced at the moment. Only in the country behind Aden did the early months of the War see hostilities between the chief belligerents. Yemen Turks occupied Sheikh Said, and the weak British-Indian garrison of Aden had to be reinforced to drive them out in

November 1914. Two months later the rebels in Oman attacked our outpost line before Mascat; they may have been heartened by Ottoman propaganda, but their effort was no part of the Turco-British War.

The summer of 1915 brought a change. The belligerents on both sides were seen to be maturing measures for involving Arabs in their conflict. The British command at Aden had been negotiating with Idrisi as the most promising malcontent within its sphere of influence; and in May he declared against the Ottoman Power which lately had contemned him, and gathering an undisciplined ill-found army marched on Loheia, but could not penetrate its primitive defence. The Turks, who had done little yet in Arabia but egg on Ibn Rashid to threaten the British flank on the Shatt, now struck a blow at Aden. An Ottoman expeditionary force led by Ali Said, a capable Circassian, came down by Dhala to Lahej in early July and pushed even into Sheikh Othman, a suburb of Aden itself. The British force was able to thrust the enemy back to Waht; but from that day to the conclusion of the Armistice Lahej remained in Turkish hands, and the British Protectorate ceased to be. This corner of the British Empire, denied by the pressing needs of the chief theatres of war any means of effective retaliation upon a handful of Turks, made an ignominious spectacle during three years, which was not without marked influence on all the Arabs. But, as the situation remained static, and Britain retained command of the sea, the victorious Turks, though able to institute propaganda in neighbouring coast-lands of Africa, caused no wider embarrassment.

In the meantime, the Porte, emboldened by the failure of its enemies to concert a landing in Syria, and by the difficult pass to which the British venture into the Gallipoli peninsula had been brought, initiated drastic treatment of Arab disaffection in Syria. Ahmed Pasha Jemal, Secretary of State and leading Committee-man, was sent to comb out of it all possible leaders and fomentors of revolt. How well his Emergency Courts succeeded the sequel would show. But his Reign of Terror produced another result not foreseen or desired. For it was the pity and fear of it that at last impelled Husain of Mecca to commit himself to revolt. Solicited by Syrian refugees to draw his sword, not for himself alone but to vindicate an Arab Nation, and afraid, not without reason, that Jemal might pass south from prostrate Syria to crush Hejaz, the Emir wrote to Cairo in July offering to rise in arms. He asked certain guarantees for the prospective Arab Nation, which Great Britain was not able or minded to accord in full, having begun conversations with France about the future of Syria and herself given certain pledges to Irak. Nor could Husain be accepted as representing a Nation. Some Arabs of most influence (it was known) would actively repudiate his claim—Abdul Aziz, for instance, who was ready to subscribe to the British peace of the Gulf and would sign a Treaty at Ajer before the end of the year. Therefore Meccan help, though sought by us less than a year before, was not too welcome now, nor to be accepted without conditions; but by the opening of 1916 sufficient agreement was reached. Husain, however, pleaded that his people were not yet nerved to fighting point, and, asked to name

a day, spoke vaguely of action after the Great Feast which would fall in late September.

The Turks, however, having created the situation which caused Husain to propose revolt, now created another which precipitated its realization. Ottoman arms had done well at Aden; but the Turco-German command was not content to let well alone. In the spring of 1916 the Hejaz Railway began to deposit at Medina detachments of picked and well-equipped troops; and a German Staff officer, under orders to proceed to Yemen with experts in wireless telegraphy, appeared at Damascus. He encountered there some objections on the part of Ahmed Jemal, who resented German tutelage in general and German penetration of the Holy Land in particular; but his party was allowed to proceed on condition it detrained at the frontier of Hejaz and fetched a circuit coastwards on its further journey to the south. By this time it had become known that the new troops in Medina, who had increased to some three thousand men, constituted an expeditionary force under orders to march to Yemen by way of Mecca; and two sons of Emir Husain, who were at the moment in Medina, warned their father that the Turkish garrisons in South Hejaz were about to be re-equipped and stiffened, and old scores might well be settled with their help, as often they had been with suspected Grand Sherifs by passing troops. That done they left the city and repaired to the tribes.

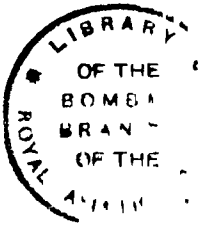
The news determined Husain. Orders were sent privily to the brothers to invest Medina as soon as the tribes were ready; the garrisons in Mecca, Taif, and Jidda should be surrounded at the same time. An oath was

taken of the Meccans, which, becoming known to the Turkish authorities, the Emir found difficult to explain. Rumours and signs multiplied in the city. The Governor-General was summering at Taif with his military and civil staffs and the bulk of the garrison. Only weak detachments remained in the Meccan forts and barracks to watch armed groups patrolling the streets below them and Bedawins gathering on the Eastern hills. Their suspense ended at dark on June 9. The town rose; the Ottoman Governorate was fired and rushed, and except for two forts and the barracks, all Mecca was in Husain's hands within a few hours. On the same night a miscellaneous force of tribesmen, led by Sheikh Muhsin, who represented the Harb tribe at the Emir's court, appeared before Jidda, having cut off the posts on the Meccan road; and Taif found itself beleaguered by Meccan levies and Bedawins of the Ataiba and the lesser Hejaz tribes, commanded by Abdullah. Four days earlier, his brothers, Ali and Faisal, disquieted by signs that the Expeditionary Force was on the point of starting, had strung a loose chain of tribesmen round Medina and begun to cut the railway.

Thus did Arabs enter the Great War on the side of the Allied Powers; and since from the first not only Husain in Hejaz, but Idrisi in Asir and Abdul Aziz in Najd, acted in concert with Great Britain and had her support (Husain received support also from France and Italy) in money, munitions, food-supplies, or, at later stages, in officers and men, an 'Arabian Theatre' was added to the area of our military operations. It is beyond the prescribed scope of this sketch to follow the events in that Theatre

to their common result—the determination of Turkish dominion in all parts of the Peninsula: still less would it be proper here to deal with the relation of the Hejaz Revolt—this alone affected the War, for Abdul Aziz did no fighting for the Allies and Idrisi's warfare was of purely local import—to the wider Arab Question both during and after hostilities. This only may be said about the outcome of Arabia's participation: that, up to the present, the social effects of her liberation are seen rather in a return to eighteenth-century conditions than in any advance to those of the twentieth. The elimination of the Turk is the sum-total of real political change. Husain has little but his self-conferred title of King to distinguish his position from that of Grand Sherifs of previous dynasties: Yahya wields less power than the Imams who ruled before the coming of the Egyptians: Abdul Aziz holds more than his forbears of Riadh, but less than the Emirs of Daraiya: Ibn Rashid and the Sheikh of Kuwait stand where their respective fathers stood, and none of the great Bedawin Chiefs has a wider range or an enemy the less. The Sultan of Mascat is still excluded from inland Oman, and Great Britain has extended her territorial holding by no new province.

For the rest, so far as the world in general is concerned with Arabia, the War has caused her to part with some of her mystery and some of her exclusiveness: she knows western men better than she did, and is better known by them. But whether, on that account or any other, she will play a greater part in the history of humanity than she has played for over a thousand years, who may foretell to-day?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